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MEMORIES

OF

NEW ZEALAND LIFE.

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MEMORIES

OF

NEW ZEALAND LIFE.

BY

EDWIN HODDER.

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PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH so many volumes have been written upon New Zealand, there are very few which give a homely account of the place and people suited to general readers. Nearly all relate to the history of its colonization, the natives, statistics, instructions to emigrants, and other kindred subjects.

The design of the present volume is not so much to instruct in practical matters, as to give a glimpse at the social life and simple unsophisticated pleasures enjoyed by the settlers in the far-off land; to describe some of the ways in which leisure time may be occupied in recreation, and the adventures incidental to travelling.

In pages 137—191, some of the events did not occur consecutively as they are narrated, but took place during several pedestrian journeys over the

same ground, and are recorded, for convenience, as if they had all happened in one tour.

The writer has endeavoured to tell a plain tale of everyday-life in a plain way, suited to everyday-folk, and trusts that, in recalling these "Memories" of four years' residence in New Zealand—years full of sunshine and enjoyment—he has not totally failed in his aim to portray social life in the colony as it really is.

BRIXTON, *February*, 1862.

Memories of New Zealand Life.

FOUR MONTHS AT SEA.

Most people who go abroad seem to start with the fixed determination to bore themselves and the world at large with unreadable and prolix details of their voyages, just as if anybody cared to know that the steam-tug "William" or "Mary" took the vessel out of dock, or that on a certain day, at a given hour, the pilot went ashore.

Then they will persist in recording the exact latitude and longitude in which events happened, as if the whole world had resolved to doubt the accuracy of any statement unless backed by figures which they were determined in every instance to prove. It is not a matter of deep moment to the general reader whether a ship travelled at eight or eleven knots an hour, or whether the wind blew from the N.E. or S.W. Ask one of these travellers, a month after he has been

ashore, if he can recollect what he was doing, or what was being done, in latitude *this* and longitude *that*, what rate the ship was going, and how the wind blew, and he will wonder that such a question should be asked. "He couldn't tax his memory with such things," nevertheless supposing, as a matter of course, his readers would; therefore, I shall try and steer clear of all such details, and merely generalize, save only when an incident occurs which I shall feel morally bound to give with exactness.

I went on board the "John Blank," a very Gershom, knowing nobody, and nobody knowing me. It was one of the most miserable days within my recollection when the vessel left England. A nasty drizzling sleet was falling, a north-east wind was searching with a deadly vengeance among the very marrow of one's bones, and a dense fog, of that jaundice-looking kind which seems as if it were disease in form, was hanging over the Thames. It is nothing to anybody what my feelings were when I found myself floating down the river, perhaps, for the last time; being borne away from home, and country, and kindred; nor am I bound to say whether I waved my hat to figures grown indistinct upon the shore, or sighed a sigh of regret. I was young; and it is a popular notion that being endowed with that blessing, sentimentality or sorrow can be laughed off at a moment's notice. So

let it be. Were I to indulge in sentiment now, my reader would in all probability grow disgusted, and proceed with me no further.

I had taken a berth in the second cabin, not because that was preferable to the saloon, but because having fully discussed prior to departure the state of my finances, I found it best suited my ways and means.

The first night of my life on board ship was strange and memorable. As soon as the day had faded, and nothing remained to be seen on shore, I went below to reconnoitre and estimate the chances of pleasant company during the passage. At two tables, covered with bran new oil-cloth, which must have cost at least eightpence a yard, and seated on low forms without backs, covered for appearance-sake with green baize equally costly, were my fellow-travellers and companions. With few exceptions they were all people who had moved in good positions in the middle class of society. They were mutually bemoaning the hardships before them, and the way they had been treated by the shipowners in being consigned to such miserable quarters, protesting that had they even dreamt of what they now knew, they never would have set foot upon the "John Blank." And truly they had cause to complain; the hatchway, which had been left open during the day, had let in a large quantity

of water, making the whole place wretchedly cold and damp. Two miserable oil-lamps were burning, and with their combined strength shedding as much lustre on the scene as one rushlight would have done. The steep wooden steps up the hatchway were wet and slippery. The steward, who upon the prospectus was described as "giving every attendance, and studying the convenience and comfort of the passengers," was discovered to be a purely fictitious individual, having his existence only in the fertile imagination of the shipowners; and the whole arrangements, which were declared in that most untruthful and fabulous prospectus aforesaid to be "superior to any vessels on any line of passenger ships," were found to be altogether of the most unsatisfactory kind.

There were about twenty adult passengers in the second cabin, and a juvenile population, which, if estimated by the uproar, doubled that of the adult. One cabin was set apart for single men, and into this I was consigned with three others. We sat down that night on our boxes, which were jammed together on the floor of the cabin, a compartment eight feet by six feet, containing four berths like coffins, just wide enough to lie in without turning, and talked over the prospects before us. To me they presented no very agreeable aspect. Our cabin was about the most uncomfortable in the whole ship; it was totally dark

when the door was closed, even on the brightest days. The deck overhead was badly caulked, and let the rain through; and it was so small that three had difficulty to find room inside at the same time. But novelty has certainly great charms, and a steady resolution, joined with stress of circumstances, can accomplish wonderful feats of moral strength; otherwise, nothing would have induced any of the unfortunate intermediates in that ship to have gone a knot further than Gravesend, where they would have disembarked, and shaken the dust off their feet at the "John Blank." As it was, we unanimously agreed at a general growl, which was held on the second evening of our transportation, that we would shake hands with circumstances and bear our troubles.

I will not dwell upon the horrors of sea-sickness; they can only be appreciated when felt, and those who have gone through the trying ordeal cannot possibly want to have their memories refreshed with such a subject. Suffice it to say, we found our ship to be in every way adapted to give us as good a benefit of the disorder as any craft that was ever built. I will not indulge in invective; but if ever there was a miserable flat-bottomed tub in this world, that made lying pretensions to be a first-class clipper built, more deserving than another to be made a wreck or bonfire, it was the "John Blank." Cease-

lessly rolling as if she gloried in it, and was wreaking a bad revengeful spite on those she carried, our vessel never gave the poor sea-sick travellers a moment's rest.

At the expiration of a fortnight the worst of the sea-sickness was over, and then we began to settle down in our floating home, and get into some systematic order.

Every passenger had to engage in domestic matters, for this reason—there was nobody else upon whom domestic matters could be thrown. We had no stewards, no cooks to prepare our food, no attendants of any kind, and although it may be perfectly true, man wants but little here below, still that little sometimes involves a great deal of trouble.

I will just give an insight into one day's work, in order that any adventurous person, who thinks he should like to take a trip to the Antipodes under similar circumstances, and is wont to speculate on the poetry of life at sea, may re-consider the matter before he makes up his mind.

At six o'clock every morning we were awakened by the stentorian voice of the third mate, who acted also as storekeeper, "bawling out, as loud as he could bawl," Water! Now, this cry had become perfectly intelligible to us, and it meant that one person from each mess was to get up, find his keg, take it on deck, and receive four quarts of water—the day's supply

for a mess of four persons. Arrived on deck, perhaps fifty people would be standing round the water cask, while the storekeeper doled out the day's allowance, without any regard to the patience of his customers; and this operation was performed every morning, wet or fine. At seven o'clock, having washed in salt water with marine soap, the supply of fresh water being so limited as to preclude the luxury of washing in that (and having felt during the operation that were it not for the old memories of childhood—associated with the lines,

> Not like to be washed? not like to be clean?
> Then, go and be dirty, unfit to be seen—

the victim to such circumstances would have foresworn any ablution until the voyage's end), preparations had to be made for breakfast. It was usual for one person to cook for all in his mess, and undertake the whole of the household arrangements for a fortnight, and then resign in favour of some one else, and so on in turns, the person in office assuming, for the time being, the high-sounding title of "Captain of the mess." Breakfast was the mainstay of our existence, and generally consisted of a pot of bergou each—a farinaceous dish, known by the Scotch as "porridge," and by the English as "chicken's food"—reckoned by all to be wholesome, but not highly esteemed as a relish.

This had to be cooked; and the difficulties attendant on so seemingly easy an operation would form one entire chapter, if Soyer happened to be writing on the same subject. First of all, a given quantity of oatmeal was placed at the bottom of the respective pots, with an equivalent of water; the "captain" then proceeded to the galley, an inconvenient place, capable of holding three persons, provided they were fire-proof, and could bear being par-baked before the roaring fires. On our vessel there were about 200 passengers, one hundred and fifty of whom had to use this galley fire for all cooking purposes; so I shall not be judged guilty of exaggeration when I tell the reader that the captain of the mess had often to stand a couple of hours waiting a chance to get at the fire to cook the morning's porridge. At eight o'clock, hot water was given out for the coffee. The captain had to appear again at the galley with his hook-pot to receive a limited supply of dirty-looking water, boiled in the same copper in which all the meat was cooked, doled out by a dirty cook, through the instrumentality of a dirty ladle. Supposing the vessel to be rolling much, the difficulty to prevent oneself going head foremost into the lee-scuppers, hot water and all, had to be cautiously guarded against.

The mess then sat down to breakfast, and a pretty mess it generally was—bergou burnt, and the brown

parts having a strong tendency to adhere permanently to the bottom of the pot; biscuits musty, and not unfrequently suggestive of lively features in natural history. Coffee without milk (for it was not supplied in the ship's rations, and none of us had brought any on board, so that for the whole four months we never had a drop), tasting strongly of greasy water, and requiring to be drunk with closed teeth to serve as an extempore strainer—drunk, too, out of tin mugs which retained the heat, and could not be put to the mouth until the coffee it contained was cold—this constituted the repast.

After breakfast, a general rush was made on deck by the passengers to breathe the fresh air and forget the meal, while the doomed "captain" remained below to wash up the breakfast things in cold salt water, clean out the pots and cans, sweep out the cabin, and perform the usual bed-making and other occupations—relieved occasionally by a morning at the wash-tub. He would then collect all jars and stray pots he could find to receive the week's provisions from the store-keeper; a surly fellow, who delighted to make the second-cabin passengers wait until those in the steerage were served, "just to bring their pride down, and take some of the shine out of them," as he used affectionately to express it.

The "captain" would then have to provide the day's

dinner, and when I held that honourable post this was always the crowning point in the day's misfortunes. I once prided myself upon my hands, and would spend many a leisure half-hour in contemplating them with quiet satisfaction. Now, I had to turn up my shirt sleeves and bury them in a conglomerated mass of flour, water, chopped suet and plums, to make a "duff" for dinner. This operation always took place in our washhand-basin, for we were told at the shipowner's in London that nothing need be taken on board save a hook-pot, tin mug, plate, knife and fork, and spoon each, supposing one plate amply sufficient for one person at all times, and every thing else on the same scale. Having, therefore, no other supply, and being similarly situated in this respect with most of the others, we were obliged to make our puddings in the same basin in which we washed; and—I dread to say it, for fear I should offend some of delicate palate—being very, very badly off for pudding cloths, we used often to have recourse to a stocking in lieu thereof, in the leg of which our rouly-pouly duff was boiled.

Our meat was generally either salt beef or salt pork, which, having been towed overboard to cleanse off all impurities and stale brine, was tied round with copper wire or string, to which a piece of wood was attached bearing the initials of the "captain." When

the hour for dinner arrived, a bell rang, and the passengers thronged round the galley at which the cook presided, standing before the huge copper, fishing up the different pieces of meat and singing out each time, "Who belongs to E. H., or H. G.?" as the case might be, when the proprietor in question would signalise himself in some way among the crowd, and press forward to receive the portion bearing his initials.

Tea was a popular meal but unsatisfactory, having only a variation from biscuit and butter to butter and biscuit, accompanied with a decoction which upon analysis we discovered was principally composed of superannuated birch-broom, but described on the "dietary scale" as tea.

This was the usual day's work, and a troublesome affair it was. We all complained bitterly, and spent two-thirds of our time in grumbling; but after two months' initiation it came to us as a matter of course, and we were so accustomed to our grievances as hardly to regard them. Now be it known, I do not attempt to describe passenger ships generally, but merely the "John Blank;" nevertheless, every intending emigrant should be remarkably cautious before taking a passage in any ship, and have a distinct understanding as to all the rules and regulations, even to the most minute points, before starting. If it is stated "everything will

be provided," it may be taken as a rule that you will not get half what you want, and therefore it will be well to prepare for emergencies. If we had provided ourselves with little luxuries, in the shape of seats for the deck, eggs, cheese, biscuits, summer beverages and jams for private cabin use, cloths, crockery, culinary utensils, and other things of the sort, half our troubles would have been obviated.

Time and patience would fail to tell all the disagreeables of the voyage; how rats held a *soirée dansante* nightly upon our beds—how cockroaches of fabulous size would put out the candles—how the ship was badly caulked, and for two months of the voyage we did not know what it was to sleep in a dry bed—and how innumerable little causes of discomfort occurred for which we had not bargained. However, we all shared alike; and being fellow-sufferers we soon came to be mutual sympathisers, and sympathy generated friendship, insomuch that when the voyage was over many of us sincerely regretted its termination as it broke up our large family-party.

In fine weather, the time was very agreeably spent on deck, and every evening divers amusements were originated to while away the time, such as dancing, singing, and reading aloud to little groups of working ladies and smoking gentlemen. In wet weather, tea parties and other social entertainments were given in

the different cabins, and round games or debates occupied the evening.

Sunday was always a miserable day—at least, to most of us. There was nothing homely about it—no merry chime to call the worshippers together—nothing to associate ideas with the past—nothing, in short, to remind one of home. People put on their Sunday clothes and strolled on deck, but this was disheartening after a morning's cooking; and those who could feel satisfaction in being respectably or even smartly attired, had that satisfaction alloyed by the extraneous ornamentations their garments received from inadvertently sitting upon tarred ropes, or stray pieces of pitch.

Service was conducted by the Doctor, who always read the prayers to the tune of the first few bars of the "Fine Old English Gentleman,"—if you will just hum the tune you will at once perceive what is meant—but there was nothing in the service to remind us of the calm tranquillity of the day of rest, nor the proper worship of God, and soon the form fell into disuse altogether.

Yet, notwithstanding all the discomforts of our voyage, which were many, and the daily, nay hourly, annoyances to which we were subject, either from the cabin passengers, who looked down upon us because we were literally beneath them; or from the

steerage passengers, who regarded us as upstarts; or internal strifes and vexations among ourselves, which were not unfrequent: notwithstanding all this, there were on that voyage, as I have since found there are on all voyages, pleasures and enjoyments commensurate with the disagreeables. Friendships are formed which last through life, sympathies are called forth which have lain dormant for years or perhaps have never before had an existence, companionships of necessity exist, which are sometimes entertaining and profitable. This companionship is, however, dangerous when existing between the opposite sexes, and leads to an immense deal of flirtation, doubtless amusing to those who are engaged in it, and frequently to those who are not. One incident connected with a courtship on board our ship I must relate as a specimen.

In the second cabin was an ancient maid of the dubious age of thirty or thereabouts, rejoicing in the name of Amelia, which her affectionate little nieces construed into Aunt Mealy. This lady was much sought after, not so much perhaps in consideration of her personal attractions as for a store of jams and other little delicacies which it was known were stowed away in her cabin, and, for any killing compliment, might change hands. There was in the first cabin a young man who was going to New Zealand, for the

simple reason that his society was not required at home. He was what is termed in the colonies "cranky;" that is, possessed of an unusually small modicum of brains, and having a strong tendency to imbecility. He had not an imposing appearance, being diminutive in stature and possessing a most insinuating cast in one eye, which always seemed struggling to look round the corner. But with this identical eye he spied out Miss Amelia soon after leaving England, and whether he fascinated her, or the eye was evil, is not known. We will suppose the former was the case, for Miss Amelia soon exhibited symptoms of partiality towards the first-cabin youth. A violent flirtation ensued, and when the sun had drowned itself in the sea, and the clear stars shone in the heavens, the sentimental pair would promenade the deck and say—but I don't know what they said.

We single men in the second cabin were jealous, and justly. We were within arm's length of the tempting stores, next cabin neighbours to Amelia herself, and felt therefore we had a just claim to any spare affections she might have to bestow. Not being thus favoured, we resolved to play a trick upon the "lovers so gay." Accordingly we let a lady friend into our secret, and, as a matter of course, at once obtained her co-operation. The first step was to have a letter written by her in a neat

lady-like hand, addressed to the first-cabin youth, stating that "Miss Amelia, not knowing distinctly what were the intentions of Mr. B——, and being anxious to prevent scandal for the future, would be happy to meet him on the hen-coops on the poop-deck that evening at ten o'clock, in order to ascertain upon what grounds Miss Amelia was henceforth to meet Mr. B——."

This letter was sent to the first-cabin youth, who was thrown into a tremendous state of excitement by the unexpected success he had met with in his first love passage. Dinner was not eaten by him that day, nor did he make his appearance on deck until half-past nine o'clock, when he commenced walking the deck at a furious and excited pace. The night was dark. At ten o'clock a thickly-veiled lady made her way up the steps leading to the poop-deck and was received at the top by Mr. B——, who handed her tenderly to a seat on the hen-coops. Not a word was spoken by either; the lady seemed greatly agitated, and held a handkerchief to her face; the amorous youth seated beside her was the very impersonation of nervousness. Something must be said by somebody, and the youth felt it his duty to break the ice, which, to judge by the perspiration he was in, could not be a matter of much difficulty. I do not know what he said; at the best of times

people say on such occasions very stupid things which have no existence in fact; but he proposed, formally proposed, and tenderly grasped Amelia's hand. But he did it at his peril. In an instant she struck him a hearty box on the ears which sent him sprawling on the deck, and ere he could regain his position on the hen-coops, the young lady, in a violent gush of tears and sobs, fled from the deck and retreated into the second cabin.

That night poor B—— took out his razors, strapped them, and———put them back in the case; but for three days he remained in his own cabin, the victim to cruel feelings.

Need I say we had borrowed our lady-friend's clothes, dressed up one of the male passengers from our cabin to represent Amelia, and played a very practical joke.

But the gist of the thing was to see the scrupulous care with which on all occasions afterwards he avoided Miss Amelia, and, coward as he was, always kept at arm's length. Nor was his discomfiture lessened when Miss Amelia would call to him from the other side of the deck, and endeavour to tempt him into conversation. He always managed to get a mast, the skylights, or some suitable obstruction between himself and his lady fair, before any conversation commenced. After a fortnight I told the poor fellow,

in confidence, of the joke which had been played upon him, and he never again attempted courting during the passage.

But practical jokes, however amusing they may be at the time, often terminate unpleasantly, or cause a subsequent disagreeable re-action upon the perpetrators. This was not the case in the affair of Miss Amelia and B——; but in many other jokes that were played, equally practical, the result was not so satisfactory.

It is usual to complain very much of the monotony of a long sea-voyage—but when there are a goodly number of passengers, this is considerably relieved; events are daily happening which render some one or other the town-talk for a time. Then the peculiarities of character, which are revealed more on board ship in a month than they would be elsewhere in five years, present a very interesting field for study, as the distinctive traits are brought out by daily incidents. Here is an example:—

Mrs. A. was the victim of fainting fits; if ever she went on deck and nobody offered her a seat, she would faint from exhaustion. If the cook spoiled the pea-soup, or burnt the bread, she would make a faint in order to get some medical comforts from the Doctor; and a hundred other manœuvres, of which woman's ingenuity is alone capable, were always at hand to assist her in any emergency. One day she was seized

with convulsions on deck. It was a fine day, and all the passengers were promenading; so that the effect was really telling. One or two rushed to the rescue, amongst whom was a John Bull fellow, who had a spite against weakness in any form—woman's especially. He took her hand and rubbed the fingers together, which were adorned with rings, so briskly, that she involuntarily opened her eyes and exclaimed, "Oh!" The bystanders imagined she was "coming to;" but this was not consistent with Mrs. A.'s idea of making the most of an opportunity, so she relapsed forthwith into a prolonged faint. Our John Bull friend was bent on mischief, and he said to those around, "This is all nonsense; I don't believe Mrs. A. is fainting at all." Whereupon the bystanders declared him to be a cruel, unkind, and unfeeling man.

When Mrs. A. recovered, she was assisted down the hatchway, and the first person she found in the cabin was her John Bull attendant.

"Well, Sir," she said, "I regret I should have so long mistaken you for a gentleman. I could not have imagined that any one with a spark of manly feeling could have behaved so cruelly as you have done to-day."

"My dear Madam, what do you mean? I am quite ignorant of having said or done anything to

offend you," he replied; for truth was unfortunately always at a discount with him, if a joke was at stake.

"Why, Sir, you have lacerated my hand with your rubbing, and you declared I was only pretending to faint, when really I was dreadfully ill."

"Pardon me, Madam, you are labouring under an error; I never said anything of the kind."

"But, Sir, I *heard* you."

"Bravo!" he cried, "then, my dear Madam, if you heard me, *you were shamming after all.*"

This story went the round of the ship; and it was observed that Mrs. A. never fainted again, until she had first ascertained that John Bull was taking his afternoon nap, or otherwise safely out of the way.

When our voyage was about half over, Christmas-day arrived—the grand gala-day of the passage. It was to be celebrated by a dinner party; plum puddings were made a week before the event; all the luxuries that could be collected were reserved for the occasion; and innumerable plans were laid for spending the day as much according to old English fashion as circumstances would allow, despite the fact that we were within the tropics. But on Christmas-eve a heavy gale of wind began to blow, and on the morning of the eventful day had so much increased as to render it unsafe for the ladies to be on deck, and everything was damp and wretched below. The compliments of

the season were given and received with a sickly giggle, and nobody had the heart to be merry. The Doctor came down to congratulate us, and presented each person with a bottle of some good port he had on board as medical comforts. Everybody put on their best clothes, and wandered about talking of how they spent last Christmas.

The great event of the day was to be the dinner party, and at one o'clock we were all seated, waiting for it to be served up. But at the eleventh hour the cook came down to say, that owing to the rough weather the meat pies—which were to constitute the first course—were not done, and that when they were, he feared they would not be fit to eat, as the sea had broken over the deck, swamping the galley, and soaking the pastry with salt water. This was a sad damper, but we tried to make the best of it, and had the third course first, namely, bread and cheese—the former article being esteemed a great luxury after faring so long upon hard biscuits. Then came the pudding—the crowning feature in the banquet; but it came in a peculiar way. Our vessel, as I have said, was an awful roller, and on this day she was reeling from starboard to port, and port to starboard, each roll giving a fresh impetus for another, and staggering with the shocks of each wave. This rendered it a matter of difficulty to sit at the tables, which were

very foolishly constructed athwart ships—how much more then to walk on deck? One of the passengers who prided himself on his "sea legs" was deputed to go and fetch the pudding; a post of honour which he felt to be a flattering distinction. He went; he safely brought it as far as the hatchway, and then a heavy sea struck the vessel's side, and the unfortunate pudding came rolling down the ladder, and burst into numerous fragments at our feet! The pieces were collected, scraped, and placed on a dish, and we still magnanimously endeavoured to make fun of the matter; but when we commenced eating it, and discovered that it had been boiled in salt water, and that our week's rations of plums and flour, together with almonds and other luxuries, were all spoilt, human patience could brook it no longer, and we lifted up our voices and howled imprecations on the cook, and "John Blank," and everybody and everything.

Besides the daily social events that happen on board ship, there are always some external excitements occurring to relieve the monotony. Exchanging signals, and speaking with other vessels, is very interesting, more especially if they are homeward bound; writing letters, and corking them up in bottles, to be thrown into the sea when the ship is anywhere near land, produces a general interest; fishing, shooting, and snaring the albatross, is an endless amusement to the

lover of sport; and the appearance of whales, porpoises, sharks, or any of the monsters of the deep, water spouts, lunar rainbows, and other phenomena, are sure to produce an excitement among all hands. Then there are the different appearances of the sea; sometimes rough weather, which, if esteemed agreeable or otherwise, nevertheless effects a change in the course of events; and a calm brings with it a number of opposite circumstances. Crossing the line, and placing a hair across the telescope, in order to let the unlearned get a good view; watching the glorious tropical sunsets, and picturing imaginary scenes in the painted clouds; witnessing the departure of old familiar stars, and looking out for the beautiful southern constellations, are all events of interest.

In our passage we sighted land several times; obtained a good view of Madeira, partially of the Canary Islands, and went close to that curious island of curious history, Tristan d'Acunha.

All these may be considered very minor and unimportant events, and so they would be under other circumstances; but in the narrow limits of a boardship world, they meet with their due appreciation. It would be tedious to tell the oft-told tale of ordinary sea-life here; to go into particulars of gales and squalls, the doubts, fears, and anxieties of passengers, the disasters and calamities of seas breaking on board,

or the thousand little incidents which are patent to every voyager. The descriptions which have been given must suffice to form an idea of some of the ways of spending time, of the privations which have to be endured, and the pleasures and enjoyments which are usual to such a life.

At length, after a hundred and thirteen days' tossing about on the restless ocean, we began to near the shores of New Zealand. Everybody was on the *qui vive*, day and night; "shore-clothes" were unpacked, the ship was made tidy, and active preparations for landing occupied the undivided attention of passengers and crew. The first palpable evidence that we were approaching land was given one morning when the sounding line was brought on deck, and the Captain was seen perpetually straining his eyes in one particular direction. A hearty cheer burst simultaneously from the passengers when, in the far-distant horizon, a faint streak like a cloud was discerned. Steadily onwards sped the "John Blank;" and by noon, New Zealand, our future home, the land of promise, was before us.

But although we were in a bay, and land was ahead, it was not Blind Bay; and the land before us was not Nelson, the port to which we were bound. The nautical instruments of the Captain had misled him, and where we were the chart only could decide.

The ship was tacked, and forthwith put to yachting purposes—a coasting tour. It was a successful one; for, in less than an hour, rocks and islands were found to agree with the chart, and tell our whereabouts. We were far off the course that should have been followed; but we willingly forebore grumbling, as a chance now occurred of seeing to perfection some of the most beautiful of New Zealand scenery before landing. The day was lovely; the bright resplendent sun seemed expressly employed in the kindly mission of showing us our adopted country in the best light; not a cloud resting over the land, seemed to give us a prophetic assurance of prosperity. It was a glorious scene. Far as the eye could reach, ranges of mountains rose one above the other, until the bold acute outlines stood out alone in the sky; densely timbered hills, displaying the most faultless foliage, rose from the water's edge, while others, covered with fern, and loose rocks and stones, looked like old ruined castles and abbeys of a former age. One very singular freak of nature was an island (described in the chart as Archway Island) formed of an immense rock, washed by the sea into the form of a tower, with archways and passages around, having all the appearance of an architectural design, executed by the hand of man. Nature seemed to have made that coast one of her particular studies, to comprehend a large collection

of her many beauties, and the lavishness of her varied designs.

On Sunday night, the 9th of February, in strict accordance with the unsabbatarian principles which obtain among all New Zealand vessels, the joyful sound of "Clear the cable," and "Let go your anchor," was heard. With a loud noise the cable ran out, and the ship rode at anchor, the passengers all joining with heart and voice immediately afterwards in singing—

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

We were not able to go ashore that night, as no boats were put off to us, and we were lying out about three miles from the harbour. It was amusing to look at the different expressions of countenance as the passengers gazed on their future home. There it was before them, a wilderness of hills and gigantic mountains, densely timbered, and without one trace of the cultivating hand of man. Until the harbour is fairly entered, all view of the town of Nelson is shut out; not a foot of level land is to be seen from the sea, nothing but the everlasting hills. We puzzled ourselves all that evening in trying to imagine where it was possible the town could have hidden itself, and where level land could be found sufficient for all the people who had come out in the "John Blank" expressly to farm.

Next morning all problems of this kind were solved. At an early hour the tide favoured us, and we sailed

triumphantly into harbour. During that time, the scenes that were going on below deck were of a most amusing, yet edifying and satisfactory kind. The termination of the voyage had terminated all ill-feelings that had existed among us. Those who had been sworn enemies throughout the passage, were now vowing eternal friendship over bottles of beer; those who had injuries to forgive, or apologies to make, were accomplishing their tasks with the greatest candour and good will. One elderly gentleman was magnanimously pronouncing an absolution upon some person or persons unknown who had stolen a cheese of his; and while all this was going forward, simultaneously with the packing of boxes, sundry presents were being exchanged in token of good faith.

A boat soon came alongside, in which I and my cabin companions managed to make our exit, and arrive the first on shore. With light hearts, full of thankfulness, we stepped on *terra firma*, and were received by the settlers, who had assembled on the beach to witness the disembarkation, as cordially as if we were old and intimate friends. We were besieged with inquiries—"How many days had we been out?" "Any deaths?" "Was Mr. Jones on board?" "Had we any passengers named Smith?" and a hundred other questions, were eagerly put by anxious relatives and friends. Some ladies were there, who

presented us with peaches, apples, and other fruits, which, after four months on the sea, without a sight of any fresh fruit or vegetables, it need hardly be said, we gladly accepted; others gave pressing invitations to breakfast at their houses; and one or two, upon learning that our friends lived some miles up the country, kindly offered to convey us in their bullock-drays. Here was a lively exhibition of the truest hospitality; it was a treat to have our hearts gladdened with the sight of a comparatively new virtue to us, illustrated so happily. Before we had been in New Zealand an hour we felt at home, and were confident that we should not only like the people, but their ways and habits. Doubtless it was very *infrà dig.*, and, to some folks' thinking, quite improper, for total strangers to introduce themselves, shake hands with cordiality, offer presents of fruit, give invitations to breakfast, and evince pleasure in welcoming mere strangers to a new country. So let it be to those who think so. For my own part, I took it as the evidence of warm-hearted friendly feeling, dictated by the best and noblest principles, called into exercise by the memory of days gone by, when they had landed strangers in a strange land. And now, although it is five years since that time, among my intimate friends are several of those who welcomed me on shore when I first landed in New Zealand.

NELSON.

Approaching Nelson from the sea, the attention of every stranger is attracted by the curious formation of the harbour, which is one of the most ingenious pieces of natural workmanship that can be conceived. The breakwater is formed of huge boulder stones, piled systematically one upon the other, and extending in a semi-circular shape for two or three miles. At the mouth of the harbour is the Arrow or Fifeshire Rock, which stands in a very commanding position for a lighthouse, but is only used by the birds that are perpetually hovering over it. The latter name was given to it in consequence of the "Fifeshire," one of the earliest passenger vessels, having been wrecked there. The entrance is narrow but not dangerous, and large vessels can only enter at high tide. The origin and character of the boulder bank has given rise to a great many speculations; the most feasible idea is this:—The

boulders of which it consists are entirely syenite, and the same rock is found on the precipitous bluffs which abut upon the sea beyond. Fragments are constantly falling from the cliffs, and the action of the heavy northerly swell, combined with a strong current, takes them towards the south. The reason of their being deposited on the existing line is, that in all probability a submarine reef underlies them, of which the Arrow or Fifeshire Rock may be regarded as the southern termination.

The harbour is safe and commodious; it is also very useful for vessels requiring to be repaired, as in one part a ship can be left high and dry on the boulder bank, have any repairs effected, or the bottom cleaned, and float off again with the next spring tides.

Arrived in the harbour we get a view of Nelson, and a more picturesque scene it is difficult to imagine. In the distance there are stupendous snow-clad mountains; just immediately around are the Britannia Heights, the Dun Mountain, and other high hills, and nestling beneath them is Nelson, with its pretty houses and gardens, churches and public buildings.

We will now suppose ourselves just landed, and take a trip together through the town and suburbs, glancing at all the objects of interest as we proceed. We alight upon the wharf, which has been recently

erected at an expense of £4,200, and as the money has been used to greater advantage than is generally the case with local Government expenditure there, we will give it notice. The wharf is angle-shaped. It is 580 feet in length and 40 in width; it has a depth of water of from 15 to 16 feet, for 450 feet of the quay, and in the remainder the water shoals gradually to the shore. A double line of rails is laid down for trucks, and upon the wharf are cranes, capstan, warehouses, for merchandise, offices, and a good landing stage for the receipt and delivery of goods by carts. This is a great convenience; and large English vessels can now come close alongside, passengers may disembark without any difficulty, and have their goods taken away into the town at a trifling expense, and still less trouble.

From the shore, the harbour presents a very business-like appearance; two or three large vessels may generally be seen alongside the wharf, taking in and discharging cargo. The "mosquito fleet," as it is called, is dancing over the waters, some leaving for the gold fields or neighbouring settlements, others just arrived with diggers bearing their precious produce, or returning to purchase tools and utensils to prosecute their arduous work. The "Tasmanian Maid," a pretty little steamer, and Nelson property, is always busily engaged travelling to Taranaki, the seat of

war; and far out in Blind Bay—on the margin of which Nelson is situated—may be seen several schooners, or perhaps a large vessel or two, either going to or coming from Australia, between which continent and New Zealand a close intercourse is kept.

From the harbour to the town is a distance of about a mile; we will therefore imagine ourselves taking the American Van, which runs at intervals between the two places, and pay the very moderate sum of sixpence for the ride. On our way to the town, we notice two brick houses of very unarchitectural appearance, surrounded by a motley group of natives, some busily employed in dressing flax, others sitting listlessly on the ground smoking, and all dressed in a curious combination of European costume. Lady emigrants imagine they would be very much alarmed to be near a half-savage race of people, some of whom are now in arms against the British Government, but they need not be under any apprehension. The Southern Island settlers have no more to do with the war than the citizens of England had with the Russian campaign, nor are they threatened with more danger. There are rarely more than fifty or sixty natives in Nelson at a time; these two houses are their head-quarters, and they use them as general places of accommodation when on their travels. Sometimes they will settle here for a month or two,

for the purpose of fishing and carrying on trade with the settlers, vending their fish and articles of manufacture at extortionate prices, which none but very raw young colonists ever think of paying. It is a rare sight to see more than a hundred natives in Nelson at one time; their pahs are scattered about at considerable distances apart, and so few of the natives have any partiality to the English settlements that their visits are generally for some definite purpose, and then of very short duration. For instance, they assemble at good fishing seasons, or if any new gold-fields are opened, in order to ascertain intelligence, and a goodly muster always arrive in time for the races—a sport in which they take infinite delight.

We next pass the Salt-water Bridge, a very plain and unsubstantial wooden affair, crossing that part of the tide which runs over a large mud flat, and has the appearance of a fine lake at the foot of Washington Valley when the tide is high; but has anything rather than an agreeable smell or appearance at low water. But this Salt-water Bridge is a place of historic interest; and as all reminiscences of the past are so very scarce in New Zealand we must not pass it unnoticed. It will be recollected that Nelson was the second settlement founded by the New Zealand Company, and was planted by Captain Arthur Wakefield and a body of pioneer colonists in 1842. The

wives of the colonists followed after; and this spot was chosen for one of their first encampments. Nelson was then nothing but a wilderness of fern, breast-high; and no bridge enabled them to get from the harbour to the site which the town now occupies: they therefore pitched their tents below the hills, now called the Britannia Heights, which overlook the sea, and where vessels are signalled in the Bay. Here they endured such hardships that even now, when they talk of their hard lot, the tears will start to their eyes as they "live their troubles o'er again." They were left in this wild and desolate place, with the half-savage natives as their companions, and the few yards of canvas around them as their homes, subsisting as they could while their husbands were away, surveying and exploring, exposed to every kind of danger and privation. It is not usual for people to erect monuments, unless merit has made a great stir in the world; but gratitude to those hardy men and true-hearted women, who paved the way for others by their own bravery and industry, deserves some memorial being erected "to our pioneers."

Passing on towards the town, we leave the warehouses of the merchant-princes, and yards of the boat-builders, and make our way to Trafalgar-street, the principal street in the city. It is wide, and for so young a colony, really a very handsome street. Cer-

tainly, one is not very powerfully impressed with the idea of grandeur—wooden or lath-and-plaster houses, rarely exceeding two stories high, are not calculated to produce that effect—but the idea which does strike every stranger, as he stands for the first time in Trafalgar-street, is, "Well, this is a substantial, comfortable, pretty, and well-to-do place;" and that first impression is the right one. Commercially, it is equal to any settlement in the colony in its degree; socially, it carries the palm above all; prospectively, it promises to rise higher and higher, developing its vast mineral and other resources until it becomes the El Dorado of the south.

At the top of Trafalgar-street, set upon a hill, is the Church—I beg pardon, the Cathedral—the scene of the ministrations of the Rev. Edmund Hobhouse, Bishop of Nelson. It is a tasteful wooden building, approached by two flights of steps, and surrounded by a picturesque garden and plantation, the result of the taste and voluntary contributions of the townspeople. It is nicely furnished inside, and has a very respectable organ, to which a good choir sings on Sundays. There is no grave-yard around the church; but the cemetery lies a short distance back upon a hill, to which the inhabitants of the valley below have protested, supposing that the wind blowing over the cemetery must be unhealthy.

As we walk up the street we look into the shop-windows, and discover that the difference between a Colonial and English town is not so great after all. There are milliners' shops, with every variety of Mary Stuart and high-peaked bonnets; linen-drapers, with unwieldy crinolines swinging outside the doors; jewellers, with a very tolerable show of *bijouterie;* and music-shops, with a selection from Mozart or Handel, to "Old Bob Ridley." There are stationers' shops, with all the cheap literature, where books published in England at two shillings can be purchased for half-a-crown; and newspaper offices, where, besides the "Nelson Examiner" and "Colonist," the two local papers, nearly all English papers and periodicals can be obtained. Then in more substantial matters, affecting the inner man, there are grocers, butchers and bakers in abundance, wine-merchants, brewers, and pastry-cooks. Epicures can procure tins of salmon or lobsters, whether in or out of season; and people of dainty appetite may obtain almost any luxury, provided they are prepared to pay well for it.

Nelson abounds in public buildings, into some of which we will peep ; and first into the new Government buildings, which have been formally opened during the past year. Unfortunately, they are poked away in a very obscure part of the town, for certain good reasons—best known to those whose in-

terests were at stake in the selection of a site. The buildings are in the Elizabethan style of architecture, designed by Mr. Maxwell Bury, of Nelson; and the whole of the materials employed in their erection were procured in the province. The Council Chamber, or Provincial Hall, is the largest room in the colony devoted to similar purposes; it is seventy feet in length, thirty in width, and twenty-one feet high. It contains a reporters' and strangers' gallery, and is very elegantly yet neatly furnished. The whole of the interior fittings are of polished red pine, a very beautiful and useful wood, which abounds in the New Zealand bush.

Not far from the Government buildings is the New Literary and Scientific Institution and Museum, which has also been opened during the past year. It is conveniently situated, and possesses every requirement to make it a most valuable auxiliary to the amusement and education of the settlers, old or young. There is a good reading-room, well supplied with papers and periodicals; a library, which doubtless by this time has a considerable number of good readable books; and a museum, with a very fair collection of geological specimens, and other provincial curiosities, with maps, diagrams, and works of scientific reference. An indefatigable committee of management regulates the working of the Institution, assisted by energetic

secretaries, who procure, occasionally, public lecturers, and provide other means for useful recreation. At the opening of the New Institution, in May, 1861, an Exhibition was held, in humble imitation of *the* Exhibition of May, 1851—the Nelsonians being remarkable for their powers of imitation on a small scale. All the paintings, relics, coins, stuffed birds, geological specimens, native curiosities, and other rarities that could be got together, were exhibited; and this first attempt of anything of the kind in New Zealand was attended with such success as to warrant the promise of another Exhibition, to be contemporary with that in London in 1862.

But without dwelling on the public buildings in detail, we will just take a cursory glance round the town, and merely notice them on our way. There is the Masonic Hall, a large building with a glass roof, which the colonial children, unused to grandeur, consider second only to the Crystal Palace, at which public meetings, balls, concerts, and theatrical representations are given. On Sundays it is occasionally used for preaching, and on the periodical visits of the Judge it is converted into a Court of Justice. Farther on is the Odd Fellows' Hall, which is used for almost similar purposes.

A market-house has been erected, too far from the town to command much business; but it is well

supplied with meat, fish, poultry, fruit, and vegetables.

There is a large Wesleyan chapel in Collingwood-street—in fact, the largest place of worship in the colony, the Wesleyans being the largest religious body. Closely adjacent is a Baptist, a Presbyterian, and a Roman Catholic chapel. The Presbyterian chapel deserves notice by strangers, who are unused to the make-shifts which are resorted to in colonies; the roof and walls are lined with white calico to hide the rafters, and give the appearance of plaster.

But the thing which most pleases us is the English appearance of Nelson, not geographically, but in the number of its nice houses, with gable ends and green verandahs, surrounded with neatly laid-out gardens, and pretty flowers twining amongst bowers and arch-ways, running round window-frames, and climbing even to the house-tops. There is the beautiful valley of the Maitai, with a clear sparkling river running through it. On the banks are several good farms, and the hills around are covered with sheep and cattle. The river runs through part of the town, and flows into the harbour. It is crossed by a fragile suspension-bridge, more ornamental than useful. Brook-street Valley is the Belgravia of Nelson; the Wood corresponds to Kensington; the Waimea Road to St. John's-wood; and Washington Valley to Islington.

Every visitor to Nelson who admires fine scenery, and can enjoy a day or two's pedestrian tour, should visit the Dun Mountain Copper Mine, going up Brook-street Valley, and returning down the valley of the Maitai. The view from the Dun Mountain is exquisitely wild and grand. An inspection of the works, which are now in active operation, will repay a visit; and there are places of interest to notice on the road, both going and returning. A railway is in course of formation, to extend from the mines to the port.

Leaving Nelson, we proceed along the main road to the Waimea, an extensive plain, and the chief agricultural district of the province. It is subdivided into four districts, each having its several villages. The drive to the Waimea from Nelson is one of extreme beauty; in fact, it would be hard to find in any part of New Zealand a place presenting more of the essentials to perfection of scenery than are crowded there together. The road lies through a winding valley, surrounded with every variety of hill, from the grassy mound to the lofty mountain crowned with snow and hiding its head in the clouds; and the vast plain in the distance, belted with luxuriant bush, and washed by the waters of Blind Bay, is intersected with roads and lanes, and studded with primitive dwellings and farm-houses, nestling in the bosom of

miniature parks of the graceful Nghis and willow-trees.

The first object of interest in the Waimea Road is the Taranaki Buildings, erected by the Nelson Government for the reception of a large number of the unfortunate refugees who are located there. The site is admirably chosen on elevated ground; the buildings are roomy, and constructed with every regard to comfort as well as health, and are fitted with all requisites for culinary and domestic purposes; there is also a school, a hospital, and safes, &c., attached. However hard some of the good Taranaki people may have taken the arrangements to be at first, after leaving their comfortable cottage-homes and snug fire-sides in New Plymouth, it would have been difficult, nay impossible, for them to have found elsewhere more comfortable provision made for their reception during the temporary absence from their own province. It is anticipated, that when they vacate these buildings to return to their own rich pastures and hill-side homes, the houses will be converted into an immigrant depôt for the reception of settlers until they are able to procure house-room elsewhere.

Not far from the Taranaki Buildings, on a hill commanding a view of the city and the whole of the Waimea Plain, is the College, a Government Educational Institution, which is alike the pride and

honour of Nelson, and the envy of the surrounding provinces. Architecturally regarded, it is the most symmetrical building in New Zealand, the design of Mr. Beatson, a settler, who has attained great professional celebrity from this and other works in which he has been engaged. The system of education in Nelson is the nearest approach to the unexceptionable that has been attempted in the colony. There are twenty-four schools, the college, a competent and efficient staff of schoolmasters, about 1000 children in attendance, and an Inspector who visits each school periodically, and publishes a half-yearly report. A tax of £1. is annually levied upon every householder, whether they send their children to receive the benefit of the tax or not, and £1. a-year is paid for every child attending the school; the remainder of the necessary funds for carrying on the undertaking is voted by the Government. When the children have attained proficiency in the "Three R's," they are qualified to compete for scholarships in the college, where an education of a high class is given, inclusive of languages and mathematics. This Government system of education at first met with an immense deal of opposition, but the results have shown that nothing could have been better for the welfare of the colony, and the benefit of the children, than the course which has been pursued. Those who still object, yet having to pay the

tax, send their children rather than be losers altogether; for, objectors being so much in the minority, private schools are discouraged, nor could they present facilities for improvement equal to the public schools. The Roman Catholics and other sects of religion made lengthy protests against a system which interfered with their conscientious principles; but this difficulty has been obviated by most of the schoolmasters having stated hours for religious instruction, to which it is optional whether the children attend. In most of the schools, besides the ordinary routine of studies, history, geography, drawing, singing, and other accomplishments are introduced, tending to refine and elevate the minds of the children, and place them upon something of a footing with those in England. Each district has a Local Board of Education, elected by the people, who send a member to the Central Board (in whose hands the whole management is vested) to represent the interests of each school.

The first village we pass through in the Waimea is Stoke, about four miles from Nelson, immediately facing Blind Bay, and inhabited principally by farmers, whose well-kept estates, heavy crops, and comfortable homesteads, bespeak wealth gained by industry. Stoke is famous for its race-course; to those who take an interest in races, those in Nelson are considered to be remarkably good, which is more than

can be said for the course. Some of the Nelson horses have been victorious on the Australian courses, to which they were taken by Messrs. H. Redwood and Duppa, two enterprising Nelsonians. It is an amusing scene, for those who have only visited such places as Ascot or Epsom, to witness the races at Nelson. There is a Grand Stand, it is true, and there are generally one or two hundred of the *élite* upon it—for in the absence of other and more rational amusements, the race-day is looked upon as an occasion when everybody must turn out and see the sight.

From an early hour in the morning the roads are all alive, not with gay tandems and fours-in-hand, but with good old heavy bullock-drays, and substantial horse-carts, which answer to the "Wo, come hither!" and other similar sounds, better than the "tchluck" of the crack whip. And merry parties there are in those bullock-drays, notwithstanding the rate of travelling rarely exceeds from three to four miles an hour on good roads; lighter hearts and more joyous smiles perhaps are there than in many a gay equipage on the Epsom roads. During the races, the drays line each side of the course, instead of carriages—although there are a few of those even in New Zealand; and when the day's sport is over, the merriment of the journey home is always looked forward to as an important part of the day's amusement.

The next village is Richmond, still in Waimea East, the principal village in the Nelson province; and it would be hard to find, in all New Zealand, one more nearly approaching those in England. It is bounded on one side with a range of fern hills, over which Ben Nevis rears his head, and beyond is an unknown and unexplored region. Richmond is in the midst of the Waimea Plain, which possesses some 40,000 acres of available land for cultivation. Some of this land is remarkably good, but the rest has abundantly fine crops of stones, which are no sooner removed than the soil sinks, and another crop appears. Nevertheless, Richmond is a very well-to-do place, as the thriving farms, fat cattle, and waving corn-fields testify. There is a church, situated, as most of the churches in the province are, strictly in accordance with the letter of the law, upon a hill. On Sundays, when it is time to call people to service, a white flag is hoisted which answers the purpose of a bell. There is a Wesleyan and a Baptist Chapel; also a Mechanics' Institution, a neat little lath-and-plaster building, in which lectures and public meetings are held. It has a first-rate library, from whence books are circulated three nights a week, through the agency of a working committee, who take it in turns to act as librarians. The influence exerted by this Institution for good has been great, providing a place of

meeting for the numerous young men who live in the village, and affording rational and instructive amusement, apart from the baneful influence of public-houses, which is experienced everywhere in the colony. In such a small place as Richmond there are no fewer than four public-houses, while two general stores, one butcher's, and one baker's, are sufficient to supply the wants of the community. The principal inn in Richmond is the "Star and Garter," a very humble representative of its namesake in England.

The Waimea has one great drawback; it is visited by a strong local wind, which blows with considerable violence, especially during the summer months. It is called the "spout wind," and is attributable to the peculiar configuration of the mountain ranges. The western and eastern ranges of Nelson, converging towards the south, form a regular wedge, which diverts on the one side the force of the south-westerly winds, and on the other side the force of the south-easterly winds. The south wind blows directly down the spout formed by these two ranges. When once it begins to blow it generally lasts for three days; sometimes it gives itself an encore and continues for a week, when, if it is harvest time, the farmers consider themselves lucky if they escape with only half their

wheat shaken out; and those who possess orchards are often saved the trouble of gathering their fruit.

One village is so much like another in New Zealand that further descriptions would be tedious—I will, therefore, only give the names of those about the Waimeas. "What's in a name?" may perhaps be asked—not much, sometimes; but I fancy our ideas are regulated a good deal by names, and you may thus form ideas of the different villages. For instance, if you were seeking a house, and were to be told that Bastile Lodge and Sunny Side Villa were to be let, which do think you should prefer, not having seen?—or, had I two friends to whom I wished to introduce you, one named Jeremiah Snooks, and the other Horace Templeton, would you not form a disparaging estimate of one rather than the other, and be influenced thereby?

The village of Hope, four miles from Richmond, has hill-side homes, rural farms, and a school hiding in a little forest of Australian blue gums. There is a very little green on the hills, but the lines have fallen in pleasant places in the valley. Appleby is a straggling place, with very little to interest; in the middle of the village, a stranger would innocently ask, "But where is Appleby?" Spring Grove is in a pretty bush, near the fine Wairoa river. Upper and Lower Wakefield is about twelve or fourteen

miles beyond Richmond, with good roads all the way. Forest Hill is described by its name. Motueka is about thirty miles from Nelson, a populous, aristocratic, and important village—a considerable number of natives live here. Riwaka is a few miles farther on, situate in a delightful valley, and surrounded by rivers without bridges.

COLONIAL SOCIETY.

THERE are many strange ideas in circulation in England as to society in New Zealand; and many people, who would think of taking up their abode there for pecuniary, healthful, or other reasons, seem to possess so great a repugnance to colonial society, manners, and customs, that they are deterred. This arises in a great measure from confounding the history of the past with the present. In a young colony, greater improvements are made in a few years than there would be in an English county in a hundred. Another reason is, because people do not recognize a difference between settling in the bush, and in or near the towns; and again, because those who have gone there, and have had to encounter scenes and circumstances different from the even tenor of the way they may have always pursued in England, exaggerate their descriptions, and paint with too bright or else too dark a colour the actual facts of their colonial life.

Nelson ranks high in the social scale, and may be taken as a good type of the generality of settlements with regard to its society. It has its different classes, and those classes again subdivided; yet, taken as a whole, it presents a united, influential, and independent community.

Its higher class or aristocracy is composed of leading ministerial, political, and commercial men. There is a *Lord* Bishop, and a goodly staff of clergymen, besides ministers of nearly every denomination. In the political world there is a Superintendent—the provincial King—and a local Government—his Court, who represent, or are supposed to represent, the interests of each district in the province. Every member is dignified with an M.P.C. (Member Provincial Council) appended to his name. Then follows the official list of Speaker, Provincial Solicitor, Provincial Secretary, Executive Committee, and other dignitaries, whose office entitles them to position. There is a Board of Works, Central Board of Education, a staff of College Governors, a District Judge, benches of Magistrates, and all the other useful bodies necessary, or deemed necessary, to promote the well-being of the province, filled by able and influential men.

There is no end of Doctors, in New Zealand. Every ship-surgeon who settles in the colony takes to himself the title of Dr. So-and-so. It sounds well,

and every pretence to a title is winked at where so few exist. There are also a number of Majors, Colonels, Captains, and Lieutenants. Disappointment is sometimes felt that the Captains are men retired from the command of merchant vessels; and the less said about the Lieutenants the better. There are merchant-princes having first-rate commercial and private establishments, who rank high in general estimation, and whose influence is more felt, perhaps, than that of any other class.

The manners and customs of such a society (equal if not superior to the majority of English towns) do not materially differ from those in vogue in the old country. There is less formality, fewer restraints of etiquette, and less artificial life than in England, but more genuine heartiness and friendly feeling. Circumstances tend to knit people together; sympathies are shared in common. All are emigrants; all have reminiscences about the mother-country, which is invariably designated *home;* and nearly all have at some time or other—if they are old settlers especially—had to rough it, and bear privations and struggles.

The amusements of such a society are also similar to those in England. There is no Regent Street, but ladies can amuse themselves in the morning with shopping at the really very creditable stores. There

is no Rotten Row, but there are good sound roads to ride or drive upon. There is no Coldstream Band in the Park in the afternoon, but there is a capital substitute in the Nelson Amateur and Volunteer Bands, which play once or twice a week; and in the evening the lovers of pleasure can generally find amusement at balls, concerts, or dinner-parties, either public or private. The "Times" only comes out by the monthly mail; but there are two bi-weekly provincial papers issued, deeply interesting to those in the locality—the "Nelson Examiner," on Wednesday and Saturday; the "Colonist," on Tuesday and Friday. The former paper is considered superior to any other newspaper in New Zealand. Those who wish can attend races and regattas, cricket clubs or volunteer rifle corps, subscribe to circulating libraries, and take summer tours to neighbouring settlements, in some cases either by land or water.

In religious matters there are weekly lectures and prayer meetings at the different places of worship; a Young Men's Christian Association, founded on principles similar to those of the Parent Society in London, where biblical and other classes are held, and occasional lectures delivered. Missionary and anniversary meetings are frequently occurring. "Bohea struggles," or tea parties, are common, and are generally far more interesting than in England, owing to the fact of

everybody being known, which renders these public gatherings of a more social and family character. On Sunday, all the leading denominations are represented at the different places of worship. No one would expect to find such men as Melville, Baptist Noel, Binney, Punshon, or Spurgeon; nor would it be generally expected to find in the Established Church, as well as in the Dissenting Churches, so many really eminent and earnest men as are to be found in the ministerial office, not only in Nelson, but in most of the provinces.

One of the best criterions of the attractiveness of Nelson society is that, with very few exceptions, all who have amassed money and returned to England with the intention of settling there, have soon grown tired of English society, with its restraints, fashions, and formalities, and have been glad to go back again to their adopted country.

In the country villages, which lie from ten to twenty or thirty miles away from the city, society is altogether upon a different basis. The population is generally insufficient to form distinct classes—to be recognized as such—and therefore, of necessity, all stand upon the same level.

The small farmer, with his twenty-five acre section—the large farmer, with his hundreds of acres—the village minister, doctor, schoolmaster, and store-

keeper, are all one in the social scale, and are generally all on visiting terms.

The houses are scattered, and are inferior to those in the city. Very little attention is paid to keeping up appearances; and fashion is regulated by taste, not by rule. Ladies are not ashamed to be seen ornamenting their gardens; nor would they blush to receive a visitor when engaged in kneading the week's batch of bread. The proprietor of a farm—it matters not whether he is a magistrate or member of the Council—does not deem it derogatory to drive his own bullocks occasionally, or be seen in the village in a blue smock-frock. The ministers of congregations are not ashamed to mend their own fences, groom their horses, chop fire-wood, or turn their hands to any useful work. Those who cannot afford to keep servants, or have not room in their houses to accommodate them, manage to do without; and the daughters, if there are any, instead of practising music all day, reading James's novels, or stitching at crochet, lend a willing and helping hand in domestic affairs. Those who do keep servants do not hesitate to churn butter, attend to the dairies, and engage in household occupations, or, be seen with a market-basket in their hands out of doors.

Amusements are of a different class. In the village where I lived there were only two or three pianos,

and the lovers of music used frequently to drop in of an evening where these were, to spend a social evening together. Open houses are generally kept among friends in these small communities—"Come when you can, we shall always be glad to see you, and you know we never make a difference for strangers," is the usual invitation; and is not the unmeaning, common-place nothing, it is in some places, but is taken in the homely, friendly way in which it is given. Many have been the pleasant evenings I have spent in this way, generally meeting a few friends who have dropped in for a similar purpose. Sometimes Amateur Concerts are given by the musical folks of the village, at the Institution or School-room; one of the pianos is lent for the occasion, and the gatherings are always more like overgrown family parties than public entertainments. Musical ladies and gentlemen of good position generously take part in the concerts, not considering it improper to render amusement to their neighbours, when rational amusement is usually so difficult to be obtained.

During the summer months, shooting parties, pedestrian tours, and pic-nics are the principal amusements. There is a place called the Rabbit Island, about nine miles from Richmond, which can only be reached by carts at low tide; this is a famous resort for pleasure parties. It is a beautiful island, with

mountains of white sand, and valleys of shells, good rabbit-shooting, and a fine hard, level, sand beach. The pic-nic parties are generally very numerously attended; bullock-drays are put into requisition for conveyances; tents are carried, as there is little brushwood on the island; and, no matter if the weather is fair or foul, once there, it is imperative to remain for ten or twelve hours until the tide runs out, and the creek which forms the island can be crossed. Then there are hill and gully excursions,—these materially assist in giving that beautiful, healthful ruddiness to the complexion which characterises the colonial young ladies;—and a thousand rural treats, immeasurably surpassing the artificial enjoyments of more polite society.

Life in the bush, or backwoods, in districts far remote from town or village, separate almost from the rest of the world, has circumstances peculiar to itself. The settler's home is his world; if there are one or two families together, they live under a patriarchal dispensation, and their society is just what they make it. It has its enjoyments, like every other life, and it has innumerable deprivations. The usual programme, as far as my observation has gone, is, to rise when "the smiling morn tips the hills with gold," plod on throughout the day, digging, ploughing, felling trees, fence-making, or something of a kindred nature, leave

off work in the evening when it gets too dark to see to do any more, and lounge over a large log-fire with a pipe in one's mouth for the remainder of the evening. Vary this by spending an idle day on Sunday, an exile from the public worship of God and the privileges of the sanctuary, and then commence a repetition of the programme on Monday morning.

Of course this need not be so. Bush-life may be made an Eden, intellectual recreations may be enjoyed, social family pleasures abound, and the wilderness-home be made a very temple of domestic happiness: to repeat what has been said before—Bush-life is just what you make it.

There are a few general remarks which it may not be out of place to give here.

New Zealand is essentially a colony of self-made men. In the majority of cases, those who now exercise the greatest influence and hold the highest positions are men who have worked their way up from comparative poverty to social eminence and prosperity. A false pride shrinks from the survey of an up-hill life, and will not endorse the sentence, "sweet are the uses of adversity;" but an honest pride is ever ready to attribute prosperity to its proper source, and will magnify the strong right arm and energetic mind that has laughed at obstacles and overcome them. Colonial independence—liberty,

equality, and fraternity—thus has its origin. Although the relative spheres in society of the settlers when in England may have been wholly different, some moving in high circles by virtue of educational advantages, still, nearly all who are now in New Zealand went there actuated by the same motive—to obtain a better position and improve their pecuniary condition. Those who have had young families growing up around them, seeing the utter impossibility in their own overcrowded country of ever placing them in positions of comfort and independence, have gone there with the certainty of success as the warrant for leaving the homes of their childhood, determined to endure hardships and privations in order to accomplish this praiseworthy end. The same motive that has actuated the educated man and the capitalist, has also led the mechanic and the labourer. Leaving England for the same object, prosecuting their labours in the far-off land for the same ends, is it strange that an equality in interest generates a social equality? Is there shame in this?

Nearly all the old settlers in the colony, although now widely differing in point of station—some holding high and influential offices, while others plod on in comparative obscurity—can look back together to their early struggles and privations, shared in common, bearing together the burden and heat of the day, and

trace step by step their progress through long years of hard work, self-denial, and economy, to their present relative standings in society. There are some highly-refined minds who would think it a disgrace to be linked in such associations, who would be ashamed to stretch out the hand to a mechanic who has risen in the world by reason of steady industry and persevering energy, and now stands on the same level with themselves. Such people will not approve of colonial society. There, it is a matter of small moment whether you were appreciated in fashionable circles at home for your very limited notions of true independence. New Zealand is the race-course of labour, with prosperity and influence—real practical influence—at its goal; and he who speeds forward on the way, with nerve and strength strained to the work, is the man who ranks the highest. The present head of society in Nelson—his Honour the Superintendent—was merely a working man when he arrived in New Zealand; and now, by his own indefatigable exertions, has risen to a position which he has honourably and ably sustained with credit to himself and the colony.

There are evils arising from this state of things: wealth is often made the passport to position, without any other qualification in its possessor. That man has not stepped beyond his proper sphere, if his com-

petency ensures his success; but wealth, unsupported by talent, being a man's only recommendation, he acts a part discreditable to himself, and in the end mortifying to his constituents. Filling offices for which he has no ability, to the exclusion of men of intelligence and mental prowess, the consequence is that the progress of the colony is hindered.

Another evil is, that the race for riches is often undertaken and eagerly prosecuted to the entire rejection of all intellectual culture; and many melancholy instances occur of men who, when they have reached the goal, have found that the charms it presented in imagination have had no place in reality, from the fact that the talents, which could alone give power to enjoy them, have been sacrificed in the contest. What remains for such a case? Facts have proved, unfortunately, in too many cases, that the favourite of fortune finds no pleasure in the society which his circumstances entitle him to enjoy. He cannot understand, and therefore cannot appreciate, the refinements and intellectual luxuries of life, and he has recourse to enjoyments which appeal to the senses only to mock them; finds nothing more congenial than the society which is found in ale-houses, who sponge upon his wealth, and drag him down to an abyss of moral degradation.

These are the extremes—all between is a fair open

field for enterprise, where the capitalist and the labourer, the man rich in mental wealth, as well as the humble and illiterate, may all find success proportionate to their abilities, and society congenial to their tastes.

There was a time in the history of New Zealand when prosperity, with few exceptions, smiled at once on all its inhabitants. Since then, some of the "short cuts" to wealth have been shut up, and "No thoroughfare" hangs over many an avenue that once led to fortune. For the past few years, complaints have been made of "hard times," "temporary depressions," and the like; and certainly, in many of the provinces, the complaint has not been without foundation. At the present time, however, it may be said that the colony is in a flourishing condition. If independence is not to be obtained so rapidly as a few years back, nevertheless, it *is* to be obtained; if money is not in abundant circulation, still, money's worth is always at hand to tender to every man his fair day's fee, and prosperity is as much the beacon-light to New Zealand as ever.

The labouring man or mechanic, whose capital consists in a strong pair of sinewy arms and a determined will to work his way up in the world, can invest his capital in no better country. The care-worn tradesman, unshackled from the thousand ills

to which his trading flesh was heir in England, and unfettered from the galling antipathies unfortunately rife at home, breathes in a more congenial atmosphere.

All who adopt the colonial motto, "Work, work!" and bear in their hands "the banner with the strange device, Excelsior!" find in New Zealand, if not an independence, at least a comfortable living among comfortable folk;—but idlers meet with the same reception Beau Brummel did in Manchester—"Friend, thou art not wanted here."

SIX WEEKS AT THE DIGGINGS.

My ideas of success, when I arrived in New Zealand, were similar to those of the majority of young men who go into distant countries to seek their fortunes. Bright prospects were to unfold themselves before me, and a dozen ways to make a rapid and brilliant fortune would be sure to present themselves. The numberless instances of poor and even labouring men who had reached the colonies with only a pound in their pockets, and had risen to be proprietors of large estates, haunted my memory from morning till night. There is no telling what position I should be occupying at the present time, had I inhabited any of the extravagant castles in the air which my fancy built. I had not taken into consideration that hard-working men, capable of braving the burden and heat of the day, and earning their bread by the sweat of their brow, were the men who, in nine cases out of ten, rose to eminence there; while clerks, and others

of the same class, who know how to pronounce an opinion on kid-gloves better than on wheat-crops, and can drive a quill with ease, but hardly know how to distinguish between a spade and a pitchfork, are considered rather as an incumbrance to an agricultural population than otherwise, and unless their means are good, have either to doff their black coats, eschew scent and kid-gloves, and buckle on the harness of hard, earnest work, or sink down, not only in their own estimation, but in that of all plodding folks around. New Zealand is a dreadfully old-fashioned place—people do not think it a disgrace there to be seen engaged in hard manual work, as they do in London; so I determined to lay aside as many of my cockneyfied notions as I could, and be a colonist.

After I had been there a fortnight, seeking some desirable channel in which to throw my energies, the whole province of Nelson was thrown into an excitement by reports of gold having been discovered in considerable quantities at Massacre Bay, a distance of about 150 miles from the town. This seemed a golden opportunity, and I determined to snap at it. A little schooner, the "Coquette," was advertised to sail for the diggings on the following week, and, without any hesitation, I resolved to take a passage in her. I knew as much about gold digging as I did about agricultural pursuits; that is to say, I neither knew

what tools were used, nor how to use them; but I had great faith in the motto which guided me to New Zealand, and had no doubt it would be serviceable at the diggings—"Nothing venture, nothing have." My first active step was to purchase some canvas to make a tent; and as I sat at work, stitching my future home together, I pictured every bit of romance of which the mode of life seemed capable. I thought of its freedom from all conventional restraint, the novelty of living in the bush, with merry birds waking me with their morning songs, and, above all, of turning up beautiful glistening nuggets of precious gold. I felt rather mortified when, after announcing my plans, several friends said,—"My dear fellow, don't think of such a thing. Nature never cut you out for a gold-digger." But I had resolved to go; and learning that diggers always went in parties of four or six, I went round the circle of my acquaintance, which at that time was rather limited, to get them to join me. In this I did not succeed, and as the time came for the "Coquette" to sail, I prepared to start alone. I could not divest myself of a strange uncomfortable feeling, half of shame, half of pride, as I started off through the town with my tent, blankets and provisions on my back, and a spade, pick and shovel over my shoulder, attired in a blue slop, corduroy trousers, water-tight boots, and a felt cap. Nor did I feel any

more at ease when the little vulgar boys said, "Go it, four eyes," in allusion to the spectacles I wore; or when old settlers murmured something about the sun spoiling certain folks' complexions, and other little inuendoes. When I got on board I found a motley assemblage crowded together on the deck, all of the working class, rough and uncouth as need be. Two men partly intoxicated, seated near me, remarked one to the other, "That chap won't want to look for gold with a candle, if he carries them gig-lamps," which raised a hearty laugh at my expense. These little affronts I pocketed till we got out to sea, when, being a good sailor, and the night being rough, affecting nearly all the others, I had ample means of retaliation. This ultimately secured civility, which was all I required. There were between thirty or forty passengers in the schooner, which, had it been licensed by Act of Parliament, would only have carried a dozen. At night I descended into the hold and stowed away my packages on some bags of flour, where I intended to sleep; but, after being there for an hour, the heat and disagreeable effluvia arising from the overcrowded state of the place obliged me to go on deck. I spread my blankets and got what sleep I could, but the heavy dew falling, made every thing damp and uncomfortable.

It was dusk in the evening of the third day since

leaving Nelson when we landed at the Aorere, the nearest port to the diggings. Nobody attempted a journey thence that night; but, before we separated, it was agreed that all should start in company on the following morning. In the mean time I had an opportunity of looking around this new locality.

Aorere is the name of a native settlement, situated beside a convenient port, formed at the mouth of the Aorere River. It is surrounded with high and precipitous hills covered with thick bush. Close by the port a large tent had been erected for the accommodation of diggers, where spirits were sold, and thither all my companions resorted. Not feeling at all disposed to join them, convinced that the night would be spent in revelry, as men and spirits were allowed "to be drunk on the premises," I had no resource but to lie out, or go to the Maori pah and claim the hospitality of the natives. I had neither seen, heard, or read much about the natives, nor did I speak their language; all I knew was, that they were not cannibals, and that I should like to know more about them. The Chief, as I supposed him to be, received me with some cordiality; but I soon discovered that his hospitality would be only commensurate with the remuneration he received for the accommodation. I signified, partly by signs and the few words of Maori and English which we mutually understood, that I

wanted some ki-ki (food). He signified in return that he wanted five herren (shillings), which I considered extortionate, and, after a little protestation on either side, struck the bargain for three shillings. Whereupon he required the money in advance, which was contrary to my notions of business transactions, but not knowing how to treat them, I acquiesced. The party in the wharri, or hut, consisted of about twenty natives (men, women, and children), who manifested great delight at receiving a visitor, and examined my watch, chain, and other articles of dress, with very pleasurable, and, as I thought at the time, covetous looks. Five of the number only were able to speak a few words of English, consequently our conversation was not very edifying, though particularly animated, as the gestures used to express the thoughts were most extravagant. They gave me some dried fish for supper, with a very unwholesome-tasting bread, which had been baked in the ashes, and was too gritty to be eaten without great caution, and dried manuka leaves boiled in water to represent tea, which, however, reminded me in every way of senna. After supper, we all sat round the fire and smoked our pipes, the native men and women being equally inveterate smokers, and all joining heartily in the common luxury. The fire was in a hole on the ground in the middle of the hut, a small aperture in

the roof serving as a chimney; but which failed to convey one-twentieth part of the smoke away, and made the room almost suffocating. The night advancing, I made known my wish to go to bed, and had a table pointed out to me on which I might make my bed for the night. I was amused with the accommodation for the remainder of the party. On the shelf, over my head, three or four children were stowed away; under the table on which I lay, the Chief and his waieni (wife) made their bed on some loose fern; while the others wrapped themselves round in their blue and red blankets, and laid down upon the bare ground by the fire. It was some time before I went to sleep; the place was swarming with fleas and mosquitoes, which bit me unmercifully; and I did not feel particularly safe about my money and little valuables, which I thought some of the party might like to appropriate. I therefore put them in my socks, as the most unlikely place to be sought, and at last fell off into a good doze. This distrust arose from my ignorance of their character, which I have since proved to be strictly honest.

Waking up in the night, a strange sight presented itself. The fire was still burning, casting its flickering light over the hideous tattooed faces of the sleeping natives, as they lay in various postures on the ground. One old man in particular, who was wrapped in a

red blanket tied round the body with flax, seemed the most frightful specimen of humanity I had ever seen. His face and arms were tattooed and painted so as hardly to exhibit a piece of plain flesh; his steel-grey hair was long and matted, hanging down on his shoulders; and his ears were decorated with rows of sharks' teeth and green stones.

At five o'clock next morning I was awakened by the shouting of the natives, who were all astir, and who have a custom of breaking the silence of the morning with the most unearthly vocal salutations. Having a long journey before me, I was regaled at breakfast with something substantial—a bird of the parrot kind, called a ka-ka. The method of cooking it was almost sufficient to have satisfied my appetite. Without divesting it of the feathers, it was rolled in some moist clay, and then patted round so as thoroughly to encase it; then it was put into the fire, and, when the clay had become red hot, the case was broken and out came the bird, cooked and ready for eating, the clay retaining most of the feathers.

At six, I met the others who were bound for the diggings, and we started off together. Besides my tent, blankets and tools, I had to carry thirty pounds' weight of flour on my back, as there was at that time no nearer store where food could be obtained. The ascent of the first range, which brought us to an open

tract of table-land, was about a thousand feet in elevation, and very steep and rugged. With the heavy load at my back, every muscle was called into active operation to accomplish the ascent; and, being unused to such rough work, I felt myself no match for the men I was with, although I was determined not to be last, and strained every nerve till we gained the summit, where, bathed in perspiration, and regularly out of wind, we made a halt. As ill-luck would have it, a heavy rain began to fall, and continued all day. Our course lay over a wilderness of high fern for some miles, and then commenced a great dismal swamp, through which we travelled, every now and then sticking in the mud, or stumbling into some water-hole. The rain falling very heavily, we held a short council of war, and agreed to strike off into the nearest bush and pitch our tents, fearing lest the flour and other things should get saturated. It happened that there were three men of the party who had provided themselves with tools, but not a tent. I struck a bargain with them that we should go into partnership, share tools and tent in common, and equally divide profits, losses, and labour. My mates, or "chums," were a queer set. One was a German who could not speak English, and had a club-foot, which did not, however, interfere with his digging; another was a German who spoke English, and acted

as interpreter; the third was an old colonist, whose weakest points, as I afterwards found, were brandy and tobacco. In an hour our tent was pitched, and a good fire made inside to dry our blankets. All the others camped in the same place, and our little colony, consisting of seven tents, was formed. We then felled some trees, got all the dry wood we could find, and in the centre of our canvas town made a large bush-fire, the common property of all. That afternoon we set to work, taking picks, shovels, and tin dishes, to "prospect" for gold—one man, who had been a digger in California, having hinted that the spot we were in was anything but an unlikely one to meet with success. We were not disappointed in our search: after sinking a hole six or eight feet deep, and washing some of the earth taken from the bottom in a tin dish, we were delighted to find a few specks. This was so far satisfactory; and when we returned to the camp and found that all the others had obtained as good a "prospect" as ourselves, it was unanimously agreed that we should all remain at that place, and on the morrow fairly commence operations.

That night I enjoyed—what had often pleased me to read of in books—a bush-fire. Six or seven large old dry trees had been chopped down and cast on to the already large fire, which threw out a capital heat and lit up the whole of the bush surrounding us. I

walked a little way off to enjoy the scene. Our tents were pitched in a rimu bush (a very graceful native tree with long drooping boughs), not fifty yards from a precipice of about a thousand feet in depth, which formed the limit of the table-land, on the rocky banks of which brushwood and small trees of every shade and hue grew luxuriously. Below, nothing could be seen but one vast wilderness of foliage, amongst which wound a silvery river. In the extreme distance, high frowning mountains, which seemed to connect earth with heaven, formed the valley. It was, indeed, a beautiful sight; the blazing fire, sending up its steady flames, cast a golden tint on the surrounding foliage, and made our glistening white tents (rendered doubly white by the contrast of the dark trees in the background) look like fairy homes. Nor did the men, seated on stumps of trees, or lying on the ground caressing their dogs, fail to enhance the novelty of the scene.

At nine o'clock, everybody being very tired after the day's exertions, went to their tents for the night. I stretched myself on some fern and twigs of trees, and composed myself to sleep; but the buzzing and biting of mosquitos and sand-flies rendered that a matter of considerable difficulty. At last I dozed off, and might have slept well, had I not felt an uncomfortable cold and clammy something crawling over

my body. I made a grab at it, and discovered it to be a lizard, which seemed to prefer a warm tent and blanket to the damp ground. This produced such an all-overish sensation that I could not doze again. The following morning we marked out our "claim" through the bed of the stream, according to the published regulations, which allowed twenty square feet of land to each man for surface digging, or thirty square feet for deep sinking. Our claim was situate at the very edge of the precipice down which the stream poured, dashing from rock to rock, till it reached the bottom, where it placidly continued its course till it met the great River Aorere, and bore it company to the ocean. We worked hard from five in the morning till six at night with a "cradle." This is a machine into which the earth is thrown and rocked about until merely a small residue remains under a sheet of perforated iron, amongst which the gold is found. Great was our excitement when the last process in the day's work came—namely, washing out the residue in a tin dish; but woe-begone was the expression on each countenance when a few solitary specks only remained at the bottom, as the result of our day's work. This was disheartening, but we persevered for a day or two, until, finding our efforts were crowned with even less success, we arranged to work upon a different system, and renounce the cradle

for a "long-tom,"—a kind of trough, about ten feet long, with a sheet of perforated iron at the end, through which the gold and small substances drop into a riddle-box below. Two of our party started off to the store at the Aorere pah to purchase one; having obtained it, we adopted the arbitrary but patriotic method of using the stamp of majesty to decide who should carry the "tom," and who the riddle-box. Unluckily, the former fell to my share. I groaned beneath its weight, as I commenced the ascent leading to the plain, which had proved such a laborious task with a lesser burden, but screwing up all my strength and courage, I proceeded upward; at last, growing dizzy, and being exhausted, I lost my balance, and fell back, tumbling with the "tom" an honest fifty feet down the hill. Bruised and bumped, with spectacles broken and ankle strained, I was obliged to make my companion share the burden for the rest of the journey. Next morning we fixed our new machine, and set to work like Britons. My ankle being painful, I took my post at the head of the tom, standing knee-deep in water, and shovelling the stones out as they were washed. For seven long days we worked, sending many tons of earth through the tom, and daily expecting great results. There is a feverish kind of excitement in gold-digging which enables men to bear the greatest fatigue, and put up with

every imaginable hardship. Day after day were we standing in water (which sent the blood rushing up into my head, and almost blinded me with headache), under a scorching sun, toiling on the edge of a precipice, which had death written in its open jaws. At night we had to bake bread, repair clothes, go into the bush with our guns, pig-hunting or shooting birds, and then cook for the morrow. It was a free, wild, gipsy life, and had we been doing well, would have been pleasant enough; but at the end of eight days my companions grew tired of the work, and determined to give it up. At the dissolution of partnership came the division of profits, when the brilliant fortune of two shillings and three pence each was the sum total! I calmly received the money—bowed my head as the fair castles in the air came toppling down upon it—pierced holes through the veritable coins I received, and suspended them round my neck as the realization of bright dreams, ever to be treasured amongst my curiosities.

But I was determined to make the best of the circumstances, and try my luck again. There were about five hundred men at work at a place called Black Barber's Gully, no very great distance off; and having parted with my mates I struck my tent, packed up my traps, and started thither. Fortunately I fell in with two men who were glad to join me on the same

terms agreed upon with my former mates; and we set to work at once to fell some trees in the bush on the river bank for our tent, clear away the brush-wood, and build a wattle-wall to protect our fire from the wind, as, with so many tents about, it would be dangerous to keep a large one unless sheltered.

Next morning, at five o'clock, we started off on a prospecting expedition up the Gully. Our choice remained either to walk up the river bed, or cut a track with our tomahawks through the almost impenetrable brush which grew on either side. We adopted the former plan as being most expeditious, and proceeded for about a mile, when we arrived at a spot where floods had washed down huge trees and masses of rock, and formed a natural bridge of great height across the river. We climbed up it—the water being too deep below to wade through—but found it impossible to descend. We therefore proposed swinging ourselves down by means of supple-jacks—a stout kind of cane hanging from the high trees, and of great strength when green. I went first, being the least weight, to try it; but ere I had swung myself to the rocky bank, the supple-jack, which must have been partly decayed, snapped, and I found myself, minus my tools, being carried down by the stream. Not receiving any material injury, I soon rejoined my mates, who had scrambled down from the bridge; and

we journeyed on until we alighted on a spot which was declared by one of the men, who was an old Australian digger, to be a very likely place. After sinking a hole for about fifteen feet before arriving at the rock (where the gold is generally to be found) we washed out a few dishes, and were rewarded with twenty specks, as much as I had gained in any two days with my former party. This was encouraging, and, having marked out a claim, we determined to carry up our tools next day and commence working it. We had a disagreeable journey back to the tent, for the rain fell in torrents and threatened continuance. We soon found that the erection of our tent on the slope of a hill was a mistake, as the water ran down through it in a regular stream. We brought in some branches of trees for bedsteads, to raise us above the water, and went to bed early. It was a wretched night—the rain pelted down on our tent, and the wind howled through the trees; but after the fatigues of the day I soon fell into a sound sleep. During the night I was awakened by a loud crash, followed by a confused cry of mingled voices, coming from I knew not where. I endeavoured to spring up, but found myself tightly enveloped with wet canvas, and could not rise. I sang out as lustily as I could, and after a few minutes was extricated. Then I learned the cause of the alarm. The wind had been villanously

pitching into an old bare-headed tree with a rotten foundation, which carried its head very high; it was floored by its adversary, and its fall was directed right across two tents, one of which was ours. I was really alarmed; for we had been talking during the evening about earthquakes, which are frequently felt in New Zealand; and when the crash came, and I felt myself half smothered in the folds of the tent with the ridge pole over me, I thought for an instant that the earth had opened, and I was descending to some unknown region. Fortunately, with the exception of knocking down and tearing our tents, no damage was done; had it fallen a couple of yards differently, either way, in all probability it would have been a death-blow to some of us. It was too dark to re-pitch our tents that night, so we made a roaring fire, and sat round it till day-break, relating the most harrowing narratives of hair breadth 'scapes our imaginations could conceive.

Next day we worked at our new claim, moving away the heavy boulder-stones on the surface, raising a dam to turn off the water, and fixing our "tom." For many days after this we continued our exertions, alternately working at the bottom of a deep hole, nearly dark, and with the sickening heat and damp of a living tomb; or knee-deep in water, with a burning sun overhead, shovelling out the heavy stones, or

raising the earth in buckets to throw into the tom. Every night, as we washed the residue of earth collected in our riddle-box in tin dishes, with hope burning in our breasts, and expectations running to fabulous lengths that we might find enough to compensate for our labour, we were doomed to disappointment. We felt this the more keenly as the parties at work on either side of us were earning their four and five pounds a day each man, and did not throw half so much energy into their labour as we did. At the end of ten days our spirits began to droop, for, upon taking our gold accumulated during that time to the store-keeper, we found that it was insufficient to pay for the flour and tobacco we had consumed. Reluctantly we gave up the claim; I say reluctantly, for although we were not earning anything, and worked hard, still we were in a beautiful part of the bush, surrounded by about fifty other parties, most of whom were agreeable fellows, and our evening's amusement atoned in a great measure for the day's discomfort. We used to have one common fire, large enough to have roasted a given number of oxen, and when the day's work was over, the different parties would bring out their tea and enjoy the evening meal in company. Then, vocal and instrumental music was performed by some of the diggers, while others plucked birds for the next day's dinner; made a

batch of bread, patched up torn garments, or a hundred other domestic duties. Then, when night came on, all went off to their tents, the hum of voices ceased, and we were sung to sleep with the lullaby of Nature.

Just at the time we gave up our claim a "rush" was being made to a district about eighteen miles off, called the Para-para, where, it was said, fifteen shillings to a pound each day might be earned by merely washing the surface in a tin dish. Tempted by this intelligence, we struck our tents, packed up our traps, and started for the new field. As we left our old quarters we were subjected to the custom which prevailed there of hooting and hissing all who left; and our exit was made amid the groans of some two or three hundred men, who waved their spades, and rattled the boxes which contained their gold, as we passed.

Our way to the Para-para lay over a mountain, with an ascent of four or five miles, which, with the heavy swags we carried on our backs, was no recreation. At night we reached the scene of the "rush," where about a hundred men had already assembled, and were grumbling heartily at the poor "prospect" they had had that day. On the following morning we gave it a trial—walked the length and breadth of the valley—sunk holes in every likely-looking place, washed innumerable tin dishes full of earth at every

stream, but did not have our eyes gladdened with the sight of a speck. For several days we continued the search; meanwhile fresh parties were continually arriving, and others leaving in disgust. The latter example we followed, and retraced our steps to the Black Barber's Gully. Here we learned the origin of the new rush; it had been made by some men to tempt people to give up their claims in that place, into which they might "jump" immediately the ambitious occupants left to "better themselves." We found our old claim in the hands of some Californian and Australian men, who had sunk twice the depth that we had, and were finding gold there in larger quantities than had been found elsewhere on the whole diggings.

Every probable place in the gully was occupied, and we vainly searched for a new spot worth claiming. A number of natives had been attracted to the scene of action, and had scattered themselves in all directions; some having pitched their huts at the very source of the stream which ran through the gully. One or two adventurous parties had taken up their quarters on an adjacent plain—christened Appoo's Flat—and were trying their luck at "deep sinking;" but, as far as we could ascertain, they had not found such good tokens of success, in their holes of fifteen or twenty feet in depth, as they had upon the surface.

One party, consisting of six strong, picked men, were on the eve of starting off to explore the up-country; trace a large river, which ran not far off, to its source, and prospect on the slopes of the Quartz ranges—the supposed seat of the gold. Our choice, therefore, remained either to wait until this party should return and report the results of their exploration, or to leave the gold-fields. The alternative was galling. If we remained, there seemed small chance of doing anything in a remunerative way, unless it was baking bread, or shooting birds, and selling them to the diggers, who were too much engaged to give due attention to domestic matters. But this went against the grain. Pride receives but a slight shock in digging for gold—it is mortally wounded in stooping below that level. If we left, then we let go every chance, and resigned ourselves to failure and disappointment.

My mates were heart-sick with hope deferred. It was evident that the tide in the affairs of men which leads on to fortune had not been taken in the flood by us, and, after a lengthy and mournful debate, it was proposed, seconded, and unanimously carried, "That we 'cut it' forthwith."

Next day we posted up written placards on some trees, stating a great sale by auction would take place that evening round the camp fire. There, at

the time and place appointed, I stood on an empty barrel and knocked down to the respective purchasers our tent, "tom," picks, shovels, baking utensils—in short, all our travelling goods, chattels, and effects.

The overland journey to Nelson from the diggings is about a hundred miles. My companions determined to wait for a boat, but my patience would not stretch to that limit. I bade them and the gold-fields a long adieu, and in four days arrived at home, after an absence of six weeks, worn out with fatigue, clothes torn and tattered, and money spent. The two shillings and three pence I first earned, still hung from my neck, and to this day it is suspended on a wall in my room, in a neat little frame, where it seems to say, "Depend upon it, city clerks, ye are not cut out for gold-diggers."

INCIDENTS OF DAILY LIFE.

After my return from the gold-fields I fixed my place of abode in the village of Richmond, and settled down to more profitable and useful pursuits. Richmond is very centrally situated, being nine miles from the city on one side, and about the same distance from the primitive and unfrequented homes of settlers in the obscure villages on the other. I imagined, that from having been accustomed to a London city-life, I should find the monotony of living in such a quiet, retired spot unbearable. But I had deceived myself. Friendship knows no monotony; and after a few months I could not look out upon the plain studded with cottages, without recognising, in nearly all, the homes of friends with whom my interests and my very life were associated. I soon found that all events interesting others, through this association interested me; my sympathies were elicited on behalf of a thousand things, which I never viewed before with tole-

ration. Agricultural associations, ploughing matches, the drainage of swamps, diseases in cattle, or the introduction of a Thistle Act in the Provincial Council, were matters which became familiar in my mouth as household words. The village became my world, the little daily incidents which are too trivial to record, absorbed attention. I rejoiced and felt excited at the election of members to represent the district in Council; revelled in the perusal of the local newspapers; felt, in common with the whole village, distress at the illness of any of its inhabitants, and relieved by their recovery; watched with pleasure the signs of harvest, and knew the extent in acres and probable produce of every section of land in the place; would call in of an evening at the houses of neighbours to condole with them if their cattle had strayed, or rejoice if their cows had calved.

Life is always made up of little incidents, and very often the more trivial these are, the more pleasurable is existence; at least it was so in my case. Nothing could be more simple than the enjoyments which constituted the happiness of my life, and yet I could not have wished it to have been happier. The glorious climate and unequalled scenery, the freedom of society, and heartiness of friendship, all contributed to pleasure. To walk out in the green lanes without a cloud dimming the lustre of the clear blue sky

above, or the shadow of a fog to interrupt the view around; to feel the bracing sea-breeze cooling the warmest summer day, or the glad sunshine chasing away frost and cold in the depth of winter; to wander in the bush, whether in summer or winter, and gaze upon the changeless verdure of the foliage; never to have one's heart grieved with the sight of poverty, or to hear the melancholy voice of a beggar soliciting alms; never to feel one's individuality lost in a crowd, but to recognise in every passer-by a fellow-settler, and therefore a friend; — these are enjoyments which cannot fail in their attractiveness, whether they are the experience of months or years. Better to have the honest labouring man and his master, the dairymaid and her mistress, to know, and care for, and respect, than to live in more fashionable style, and never know your next-door neighbour. Better to feel yourself the centre of an influence, be it ever so small or ever so humble, than to live as though four square walls bounded your world. Better to enjoy freedom—not mere freedom from conventionality—but freedom in thought and action, the result of an independent self-respect, which stands on the level of all men, than to crouch beneath the sceptre of class and party.

All this was novelty to me at first, but soon it became incorporated into my very existence, and I settled down into the realities of colonial life. It had

its routine as life always has, but it was so varied as to preclude monotony. I will mention some of the events of interest which were continually occurring, as they will show that, even in far-off New Zealand, the breath of the spirit of the times is felt, and the claims of patriotism and loyalty, education and intellect, love and piety, are not sacrificed in the life of toil which is supposed to be the common lot of all colonists.

A Volunteer Rifle Corps was established in the village. At first, we drilled twice a week, from four till six o'clock in the evening, for at that time the war in the Northern Island had just commenced; and not knowing the policy of the natives, nor feeling perfectly safe from molestation, it was deemed a matter of emergency that we should be sufficiently well up in our drill, to present an appearance of resistance in case of need. I say "appearance" advisedly, for the New Zealand Government had not given us rifles, owing to the greater need for them existing in Auckland, Wellington, and other places dangerously situated in the Northern Island; and in lieu thereof, some of the corps performed their evolutions with flax sticks, not very formidable weapons of warfare, but better substitutes than anything wholly imaginary. Recently, a supply of rifles has been sent over from England, and distributed to the different corps, but during the whole time I was a soldier, there were

none to be had. We wore no uniform—a proof that patriotism and loyalty alone made us volunteers; perhaps, though, the Militia Act, which was subsequently put into operation, may have exerted some influence. A greater diversity of costume than ours has probably never been seen in any other corps. Blue slops, Crimean shirts, a few coats; Panama, wide-awake, and straw caps; white canvas, corduroy, and occasionally cloth trowsers, were well assorted, and presented a singular diversity, although the variety was not charming.

A field-day was another name for a large social gathering, when we met our friends from the neighbouring villages, and enjoyed a few hours' stroll and conversation with them.

The rifle corps was the parent of other associations. As we met other companies, and challenged them to compete with our company in drill, why should not each company form a cricket club, and give an occasional challenge for a match in that noble and manly game? Cricket clubs were therefore formed in almost every district, and many a festive summer day has been spent in witnessing and taking part in the matches. The people of New Zealand do not grudge a day for recreation now and then, and at certain seasons of the year, during the intervals between seed-time and harvest, for instance, when farm-work is not

so pressing as at other times, or upon such occasions as the Queen's birthday, or anniversary of the founding of the settlement, many pleasant parties are formed for pic-nics, and other rural gatherings. Few enjoyments excel a good large pic-nic, when all in the party are friends and neighbours. Six o'clock in the morning was the ordinary hour for starting; the bullock-drays would be brought to one central spot, where all the company would assemble, and start off together. Three or four hours were generally occupied in the journey; the place of destination was almost invariably to one of the beautiful islands in the bay, which could be reached by carts only at low tide. Arrived on the island, and a camping place chosen, operations would immediately commence for breakfast. Each person contributed to the general stock of provisions, and there was never any lack of assistance in preparing fires, boiling water, and attending to those little domestic concerns which are a nuisance at home, but constitute a large share in the pleasure of an open-air meal. Then, when all was ready, the whole party would sit round and do justice to the many dainties provided by so many families. After breakfast a general separation took place, the gentlemen with guns and dogs to enjoy a morning's rabbit-shooting, the children to paddle in the surf, and the ladies to gather sea-gull's eggs and shells.

In the afternoon all assembled on the beach, and the remainder of the day was spent together, in playing the thousand games which are current on such occasions. When the tide allowed, which was not till ten or twelve hours after landing on the island, the bullocks would again be yoked, and the merry *cortège* return to the villages, making the quiet lanes echo with the strains of music, or the hearty laugh.

During the winter months, when the farm-work ceased by about six o'clock, and the long evenings set in, opportunities occurred for social meetings of an intellectual kind, which were gladly welcomed. There was a Debating Society in Richmond which had about forty members, and met weekly in the large Government school-room. The questions for discussion were generally of a practical nature, suited to the capacity and special bent of inclination of the young men who constituted the Society. "Which is the safest and most humane way of slaughtering bullocks?" was a subject which called forth an unusual amount of eloquence, and required two whole nights for its solution. "Is the American blight best cured by lime-wash, or soap-suds?" was another topic of very general interest, and drew not merely the members together, but many visitors, whose apple trees were affected by the disease. Questions relating to local politics were always in demand—such as

"Centralisation or provincialism, which is best?" or, "What are the best means for disposing of the waste lands?" Occasionally, more purely intellectual subjects were discussed, but never with so much heartiness as those which were of an every-day practical nature. In connexion with the Debating Society, a Manuscript Magazine was published and circulated among the members and friends. It contained a report of the debates, an occasional tale founded upon some incident of local interest, an essay, correspondence, and poetry. As an illustration of the manner in which the subjects of debate were handled, and a specimen of periodical literature in a New Zealand village, I extract from the Manuscript Magazine a facetious report of one of the meetings of the Debating Society.

Notes of Debate upon the question "Which is the safest and most humane way of slaughtering Bullocks;" opened by Mr. Slowtalk, as follows:—

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—Midst a volley of abuse,
Which I have learned to bear from constant use,
I rise, and though you don't seem pleased to see me,
I've got a splendid subject—so I don't deceive ye.
Bullocks are animals, with which both I and you
Have very often, I am pleased to say, a deal to do;
And as we can't well eat 'em while they live,
I've got a new effectual method I will give,
And teach you how to kill 'em. I've often been
In butcher's stockyards, and with curdling blood have seen

The poor beasts pole-axed; that's an awful plan,
And isn't worthy of enlightened man.
I've seen 'em shot with bullets, and I' m sure
The creature's sufferings are most awful to endure.
Now as these ways are both inhuman and unkind,
I'll tell you mine, if you've a mind
To listen—which does not seem the case
By all the frowns I see on every face.
However, as I'm on my legs, I mean to keep 'em too,
While I expose the safest and humanest way to view.
Just get your bullock in the stockyard safe, then run
And get from off your shelf (or where it's kept) a gun;
Load this with smallest shot—be sure they're not too large,
And do not have (for mercy's sake) a charge
More than would kill a thrush, or bird beside the sea,
Called Sandpiper. Having done this, see
The bullock turns his head with passive smile
To where you stand. Shoot his defenceless head,
One gasping struggle, Mr. Chairman, and the bullock's dead!"
[*Note*—The burning eloquence of this exciting speech
Produced immense confusion: each
And every member loosed his waggish tongue,
And the whole building with their voices rung,
That our reporter (who'd a noisy fellow by his side)
Distinguished nothing save loud cries "Divide!"]

Mr. Slowtalk rose again, with sorrow in his face,
"Don't, don't divide, I beg—it would disgrace
Humanity, to pass this subject by—"
Then Mr. Snip arose with fire-flashing eye
And said—"Unaccustomed as I am
To public speaking, I'm a man
Who never will sit still and hear of vile oppression.
Mr. Chairman! gentlemen! I cannot give expression

To the ideas that float upon my mind,
But I consider it is most unkind
(Not to Mr. Slowtalk, but the beasts,) to pass
This proposition of a sad and tragic farce
Unheeded. I am quite prepared to say,
The pole-axe is the only proper way.
In the first place, Mr. Chairman, I'm afraid
Our brother member wants to take away the trade
Of butchers—and as he can't adopt their plan
Of killing with the axe, he'll kill them how he can.
Now I have often seen a butcher, with one blow
Lay dead the bullock at his feet below,
While other men have hit them on the head
For sixteen times before the brutes were dead!
And I have seen the small-shot used, but how?
Why, when some fellows went to shoot a cow———"

Mr. Chairman rose and said, "Stick to the point, my mate,
It's *bullocks* we're discussing, cows must take their fate."

Mr. Snip, corrected, thus replied—"I must tell
My story, *call* the cow a bullock, it will do as well!
They caught her—him I mean—and shot;
Some of it missed—the poor beast got
Infuriated—madly rushed away,
And never has been found up to this present day!"

The starting tear was visible in many an eye,
The heavy air was rent with many a sigh,
And handkerchiefs were raised to many a nose.
At length young Tim Flaherty rose,
"Say what you will, I'll not detain you long,
But simply prove that all of you are wrong,
For *I myself* have often seen, and am prepared to say
That shooting with a bullet is the only proper way.

'Tis most effectual, easier than the rest,
And I am sure the bullocks like it best!"

Mr. Harrower remarked that "He had known a case,
Which happened in some neighbouring place,
Of how a butcher in a stockyard got
His bullock, and with bullet loaded, shot!
But woe to him, it glanced from off its head,
Passed through its shoulder, shot an infant dead
Who stood beside the yard; and what was still more sad,
The butcher lived a wretched life, and then died raving mad!"

[We very much regret to give this limited report
Upon so grave a subject, which most surely ought
To be investigated.—We can only state
That at an hour, far advanced and late,
The meeting closed; but no verdict was returned
Until some members present should have learned
From Mr. Slowtalk how to shoot—and he
Had promised, when he killed, that they should come and see.
The subject was adjourned until some other night,
When all the members with united strength might
Call for it again. But considering the effect
It had upon their nerves, should they not reflect,
Most seriously, whether it is wise or not
To murder subjects with such useless shot?]

Among the other evening recreations was a weekly singing class, and fortnightly lectures, in connexion with a Young Men's Biblical Association, held at the Mechanics' Institution. The reading-room of the Institution was open to members three nights a week; and for those who had interests in higher things,

alternate week evening-services were held in the chapels. A great excitement prevailed when a box of new books was received at the Institution from England. Any popular work, that had been causing general interest at home, was always bespoken by a dozen members at once; and when it started off on its circuit, generally went the whole round of the village before it found a resting-place on the library shelves.

Richmond being at a convenient distance from Nelson, all attractions in the city were easily accessible. A van left the village daily, in which passengers were charged the fare of two shillings, and were expected to walk up the hills to relieve the horses. The arrival of an English mail was an occasion for many to avail themselves of an excursion to Nelson, to receive their letters. A post-office was kept in Richmond at the Wesleyan Chapel, where letters could be obtained twice a week only, and then they had to be sent for, as no such useful official as a postman has yet found a berth in the district. If the English mail arrived in Nelson on Monday, the letters would not be distributed at the country post-offices until Wednesday, and the suspense was too long to be endured. An exile from home only knows how to appreciate letters from kith and kin. Distance has been annihilated, the past has stood in the place of the

present, and I have asked myself, "Am I really in New Zealand?" when I have been perusing a budget of letters from those with whom all my former life had been associated; and the written words spoke so plainly that I fancied I was again in the old country, surrounded with the companionships of home. The arrival of the mail was often celebrated by social evening gatherings; every one had received some news which could be shared by neighbours, and it added to one's own pleasure at receiving good intelligence to know that others were enjoying the same. Many a time have we sung together, at a friend's house, the chorus—

"Good news from home, good news for me,
Has come across the deep blue sea,
From friends that I have left in tears,
From friends that I've not seen for years."

The next best pleasure to receiving letters was the English local newspapers. How many a time have I read column after column of events that had taken place months before, with an interest which none perhaps felt more strongly, even though they were the subjects of the news. Even advertisements had their charm—the mere perusal of names would bring back pleasing recollections of the past; a fund of thought was supplied by the table of births, deaths, and

marriages; and a reverential feeling was produced by the oft-repeated, emphatic "we," of the leading articles. Most people commenced writing their replies immediately after the receipt of the English letters, even though the mail might not be leaving for a fortnight. It was such a pleasure to feel something like a conversational relationship still to friends far away—to be able at once to answer a question—to write while the feelings kindled by words of love from home were yet warm, and while those words had voice and sound.

If we rejoice with those who rejoice, we should also weep with those who weep. It is usual in New Zealand, upon the death of any of the settlers, to announce the decease in the newspapers, stating also the day and hour of the funeral, and inviting any friends of the deceased to attend. After I had been in Richmond about two years, an old lady, the mother of a much-respected farmer, died at a very advanced age, and according to custom the announcement of her funeral was published. The day on which she was to be buried was Sunday, and the funeral was to take place at the Cemetery, about a mile and a half from her late residence. I went down to the house at the time specified to join the procession, and show a last mark of respect to the memory of my friend's mother. I was surprised to find about a

hundred and fifty people assembled for a similar purpose, all dressed in becoming mourning, and evidently sharing in the grief which had fallen on the bereaved household.

Two by two they fell in rank, as the body was borne away in a cart draped with black cloth; and as the procession moved along, others, who had assembled at the corners of the roads from more distant parts, joined the train. It was a deeply affecting sight, that long line of mourners of all classes in society, following to the grave the remains of an aged woman, whose only claim to this respect was that she was an old settler, a good neighbour, and a kind mother. The funeral service was performed by the Presbyterian minister, who delivered a brief but impressive address, and after engaging in prayer, the body was lowered to its last resting-place. Then a hymn was sung, and silently and solemnly the company separated. In the evening, a funeral sermon was preached by the Presbyterian minister in the Wesleyan chapel—for, happily, sectarianism does not prevail much in the colony—at which nearly all who attended the funeral were present. This is a slight incident in itself, but to my mind it speaks volumes in favour of a community so constituted as that the joys and sorrows of one, become the joys and sorrows of all.

On another occasion, when a little school-girl died,

she was borne to the grave by six elder girls dressed in white, and followed by many adult friends, and about sixty children, all decently attired in mourning. On the day of the funeral the schools were closed, and a general invitation to the children given to join in the procession—an appropriate way of teaching the younger generation to cultivate those feelings of love and sympathy which refine the mind, and give tone to character.

For the past two years, diphtheria has been very prevalent among the children, more especially in Nelson and Taranaki; with this exception, the heartiness and robust health of children in New Zealand is remarkable. If any settler in the Waimea, old or young, happened to be ill, it was never necessary to publish a bulletin as to the progress or alleviation of the sickness. Ask any casual passer-by, "How is So-and-so to-day?" and you would be furnished with information upon all the good or bad symptoms which had taken place in the patient.

The Sabbath was essentially a day of calm and tranquil rest in the Waimeas; no din of traffic, or painful sight of trading, ever marred the peaceful, hallowed day. There were works of necessity to be performed which are compulsory in all agricultural districts, such as milking cows, feeding the live-stock, and attending to the cattle. But this was always

early morning work, and was all over long before people were abroad in the roads.

By eight o'clock, the lanes and roads were all alive with children journeying to the Sunday school, many of them who came from a distance carried with them satchels, containing provisions for dinner, as there would not be time to return to their homes after morning service, and be back again in time for the afternoon school. The school was conducted in the Wesleyan chapel—the largest place of worship in the village, and therefore the most convenient for the purpose, not fewer than a hundred and fifty children being in constant attendance. Although held in a Wesleyan chapel, it was not a Wesleyan school; the children of Churchmen, Baptists, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and other denominations used it in common, and were taught the simple truths of the glorious Gospel of the one Lord. The indefatigable exertions of the Superintendent, and the few teachers who co-operated with him in his arduous work, were amply repaid by the regularity in attendance of the children, the admirable order which prevailed in the school, even in the warmest summer weather (when it is generally so difficult to arrest attention), and the sound biblical knowledge possessed by the elder classes. At half-past ten, the school was dismissed, and the seats arranged for the congregation, who

assembled at eleven o'clock. Again the roads and lanes were all astir with people journeying to the different places of worship. Two morning services were held in the village, one at the church (of England, improperly so called), the other at the Wesleyan chapel. The attendance at the latter place was three or four times larger than at the former, the Wesleyans being, as I have stated before, by far the largest religious body. This statement, however, requires qualification by adding "attending a place of worship;" for in New Zealand, as elsewhere, there are hundreds who never enter a church or chapel from one year's end to another, never show the slightest regard to religion, or its observances in any form, who perhaps do not even lead a moral and respectable life, yet call themselves Churchmen. In the census papers, these Nothingarians are called Churchmen, and therefore my statement that the Wesleyans are the largest body appears wrong; although, with the qualification that those who profess nothing should be called nothing, it is perfectly correct.

The church in Richmond is small, unadorned with costly paintings or stained glass, and never echoing with the solemn peal of the organ. There is a reading desk, which, with a plain table and two cane-bottomed chairs, constitutes all the furniture of the "altar," if we except two or three tin candle-holders,

which are occasionally used in winter, in the absence of gas. The first time I visited the church I must confess to have been impressed with a strong sense of the ludicrous. The clergyman arrived after most of the congregation had assembled. Walking up to the reading desk, he divested himself of coat and gloves, and then took out of a mysterious-looking blue bag (of the kind indigenous to Chancery Lane) a surplice and other ornamentations, with the names of which I am not familiar, and robed himself in the presence of the audience. Then, when it was time for the commencement of the service, I was startled to hear issuing from behind a red screen at the back of the congregation (which enclosed about a fifth of the space in the church) strange sounds of flutes, violins, and bass viols being tuned up to some unnatural key; presently they struck up a chant, intended, I suppose, to produce reverential and devotional feelings, which, in my case, totally failed in its design; for the bows of the instruments and legs of the performers were seen below the screen, which was not large enough to hide them, and now and again a head, or a hand grasping a fiddlestick, popped up above the screen, which had so much the appearance of a Punch-and-Judy show, that it required strong self-control to prevent my risible faculties from gaining a mastery over me. This "full orchestral accompaniment"

was fortunately discontinued after it had been tried a few months, and the service was conducted in a quieter way in every sense. Then the beautiful formula of worship became as impressive as ever.

Services were held in the Wesleyan chapel, morning and evening, conducted either by the Superintendent of the circuit, the Assistant-Superintendent, or one out of ten lay local preachers, whose names were on a "plan" regulating their attendance in the different villages in that and other districts. The Superintendent was a highly intellectual man, and an excellent preacher; so also were some of the local preachers, although as a rule they were not gifted with great educational attainments. For instance, I recollect hearing a sermon preached by one who took for his text the words, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." The discourse was divided into three heads:—1. What he refused. 2. What he *choosed*. 3. Why he *choosed* it. In the preamble the preacher begged that should he indulge in eloquence, the audience would not allow themselves to be carried away by it. Few were.

The singing in this chapel was led by flutes, played by two youths, and was the best in the village.

In the afternoon, services were alternately conducted by the Baptist minister in the Baptist chapel,

and in the Mechanics' Institute by the Presbyterian minister. The former was by far the most comfortable chapel in the district, having backs to the seats —a luxury not found elsewhere. There were a few Roman Catholics in the village, but not sufficient to form a congregation. They had, therefore, to attend the services held in Nelson, or in a village about four miles from Richmond,—the only places in the province in which Romish chapels were established. The regularity and patience with which these weekly pilgrimages were performed was most exemplary, as well as the indefatigable exertions of the priests, who paid weekly visits to every family under their charge, to catechise and instruct the children, and administer those comforts and consolations which are supposed to belong to their religion.

English ministers little know the meaning of hard work, in comparison with their brethren in the colonies, preaching three times a day, and riding sometimes for twenty or five-and-twenty miles on horseback to address perhaps small, disheartening congregations. There the work of faith is indeed a *labour* of love.

I used at first to miss the merry chimes of church-bells waking the Sabbath morn with their music, and long for some of the old associations of the day as spent in England—the large chapels densely thronged

—the burning words of eloquence from popular preachers—and the grand union of voices in the song of praise; but soon this feeling died away, and the homely services and quiet unostentatious gatherings, with a friend in the pulpit and friends all around, became to me more than that for which I once longed.

A SUMMER HOLIDAY RAMBLE.

"Going out of town" in the season is performed laboriously in England every year, and people who visit the fashionable watering-places, and stiffly promenade upon crowded beaches, imagine they are enjoying themselves. Never was there a more mistaken idea. To enjoy nature you must be alone with nature, away from the haunts of men, and the din of towns and cities, unshackled from the restraints of conventionalism, and free to wander forth whithersoever you will, no bugbear of fashion or propriety—so called—daring to make you afraid.

Contrast a summer holiday in England with one in New Zealand, and who in his heart, unless it is corroded with the rust of his conventional chains, will not prefer the latter?

Imagine yourself going by train down to Brighton, living at an hotel, strolling out every morning to the beach, and scorching on the burning sands in

uncomfortable clothing, or sailing about, within a mile or two of the uninteresting coast; then returning to dress and dine, and finishing up the day in a crowded room, pining for a draught of fresh air, or some rural enjoyment; and, failing this, going to sleep on a soft bed in a close room. Repeat this with a few slight alterations for a fortnight, and then imagine your feelings at the termination of the holiday—will they not contrast strongly with those likely to be produced by a week's summer holiday such as I am about to describe?

Nelson is cut off from the extensive pastoral district of the Wairau—which until lately formed part of the province—by a stupendous chain of mountains, of which the Devil's Arm-chair and Ben Nevis are the highest points. The distance from Nelson to the Wairau, by the usual overland journey, is about two hundred miles, while the actual distance as the crow flies is not more than fifteen or twenty miles. It has always been supposed that a gorge might be found between the mountains, or a track made over them sufficiently accessible to enable foot passengers, at least in the summer season, to make the journey that way, and thus save a great deal of unnecessary time and fatigue. In order that such a discovery might be made, a reward was offered to any adventurous person or persons who would find an available route.

In the beautiful month of December, when the Midsummer holidays had just commenced, I had some time to spare; and being anxious to take an exploring tour, I asked my lively Irish friend Peter, and one of my pupils, a strong sturdy lad of sixteen, to accompany me on an expedition to try and discover this supposed mountain pass. (It always adds to the pleasure of a holiday to have some definite object in view, whether that object is carried out or not.) My friend Peter was a real son of Erin, a light-hearted, merry, manly fellow, bred and born among mountains and hills, brim full of sparkling wit ever fizzing over, and abounding with interesting narrative. John was a youth who had integrity written with flourishes upon his handsome face; a regular Cœur-de-Lion character, combining the happy sunshine of boyishness with the courage and energy of manhood. Never did an adventurous trio set out with lighter hearts than did we.

With blankets and provisions on our backs we started off together, early one morning, over the Grampian hills, which bound the Waimea, the large agricultural district in which we lived. Having reached the top, we looked down on a perfect sea of hills and undulations, rising one above the other until they reached the Snowy Mountains beyond. Over these mountains lay our course. We took our bearings with the pocket compasses we carried, and

descending into the valley, waded the broad Waieti river which traverses it; and then, not finding any valley running in the direction we wanted to pursue, ascended the second range, setting fire to the fern as we went along, in order to guide us on our return. By three o'clock in the afternoon we began to feel hungry, and at the edge of the bush, shaded by tall graceful rimu and totara trees, with a thousand varieties of ferns and shrubs, we spread our blankets, and sat down to dine. While we were enjoying the repast, and luxuriating in a rest after our long walk, a rustling noise in the bush attracted our attention. Peter snatched up a gun, while John and I called the dogs, thinking we had started a wild pig; but to our astonishment a drove of wild cattle came tearing through the bush with their heads to the ground, rooting up the brushwood with their horns as they passed. We slung our blankets and packages on a tree, behind which we ensconced ourselves thinking they would make a rush past, and leave us without further molestation. This was a mistaken idea; in a few moments we were surrounded by half-a-dozen rushing down upon us with the fury of madness. Peter, who was light and active, and had often made one of a party to explore the bush in search of these animals, which years ago must have wandered from their owners, and have since increased and

multiplied, made a jump at the branch of a tree, up which he climbed, and commanded not only a safe retreat, but a good aim for his gun on the assailants below. John and I took to our heels and dodged among the trees; but we soon found this a very fatiguing and dangerous bit of amusement, as we continually found ourselves coming into much too close contact with the animals to be agreeable.

To add to our discomfort, Peter seeing a beautiful shot, and being perfectly unable to resist the temptation of sport, fired at a bullock which was tearing down our swags and red blankets from the place on which they were hung. The noise of the report only infuriated the others the more, while we were becoming more and more out of breath. The tree on which Peter had climbed was a large fuschia, the only sort of branching tree in that part of the bush, all the others being lofty, growing perpendicularly for thirty or forty feet before the foliage commenced. The fuschia is a fine tree, covered with flowers, which, however, are not so highly coloured as those on the English plant. It bears a berry, of which the children there are as fond as those in England are of blackberries, and of which the settlers make a very good jam. Between this tree and ourselves the cattle had taken their position, and it was not until we had had an hour's hard work in dodging them, that we were

able to join our friend on the branch. After waiting patiently for some time, not daring to venture from our place, we were obliged to resort to arbitrary measures for their removal. Not knowing how long we might be detained, and being anxious to push on, we fired amongst them with some irritating small shot, which probably succeeded in perforating their skins, for they shook the dust from their heels upon us, and made a simultaneous retreat. We watched them out of sight, and then resumed our journey.

That night we camped at the top of the third range of hills, just at the edge of the bush, through which we should have to penetrate on the morrow. It was a beautiful spot, presenting all the requisites to form the perfection of scenery. Undulating hills rising like the waves of the sea, miles of dense bush, with hues graduating from pale delicate green to the colour of the sombre cypress, all tinged with the golden rays of the setting sun; valleys with sparkling streams below, and lofty peaks beyond, standing like watchful sentinels to protect the scene. We made a large fire, collected some twigs of trees on which to make our beds, and gave ourselves up to enjoyment. While seated round the fire we were visited by some wood-hens (weki), birds about the size of our domestic fowl, which came stealthily towards us, and being so "unaccustomed to man," we

were able, by lying perfectly still, to catch them with our hands, when they set up a shrill scream, not unlike the sound of a human voice, which brought round several others, prompted perhaps by sympathetic feeling to see what was the matter, by which means we were provided with a good supper.

Next morning we started through the bush; before doing so, however, we made a huge fire, the smoke of which would be a guide in case our compasses should be attracted by iron in the hills, or from any other cause go wrong. We then appointed Peter as leader, I went next, and John brought up the rear; in which way we walked, breaking off the branches of the trees as we passed, in order to guide us in returning. Looking from a distance at the Bush, it is impossible to judge with any degree of accuracy its extent. It may be first an ascent, then a precipitous declivity, rising again on the other side to a greater elevation; all the eye can see is a mighty forest, and all the traveller has to do is to push through it. We continued all day bearing on our course, but without finding anything like a track, as human beings had rarely, if ever, been that way before. There is something extremely interesting in exploring an untrodden country, being in the noble wilderness of nature's glory, and making the undisturbed solitude of ages ring for the first time with the sound of human voices.

It makes one long to be clothed with the purity which Adam had before he fell; to enjoy full communion with creation. Angels might choose such places in which to sing their anthems with scarcely less joy than in the courts of heaven. That night we came to the commencement of the actual ascent of the Snowy Mountain, although we were then at an elevation of six thousand feet above the level of the sea, and still far above rose the frowning heights over which we hoped to cross on the morrow. We slept at the base of some huge rocks, which were overhung with the beautiful crimson-flowered rata, and wild clematis, with the stars peeping through the foliage overhead, and the gentle breeze singing an evening hymn among the branches.

We were rather exhausted for want of water, not having been able to procure a drop all day, and had been obliged to keep little pebbles in our mouths as the best preventive of thirst.

Very early next morning we started to complete the ascent; an hour or two brought us to the termination of the bush, where we made another large fire, to serve us as a signal on our return. And now commenced the most laborious part of our journey; huge masses of rock—some so perpendicular as to be perfectly impassable, others so sharp as to cut our boots almost to pieces—had to be climbed; some without so

much as a blade of spear-grass to hold on to, and others where we were obliged to spring from one block to the other across black yawning chasms.

Arrived at length, after about six hours' hard climbing, at the height where snow lies through nine months of the year, we found even a greater difficulty of ascent, the rock being all loose and crumbling, and a foothold only being obtained by digging the foot well into the ground. Fortunately we were for some time enveloped in a thick mist, which partially hid from view the yawning depths below; but even then we dared scarcely look down—the sight of the sea of clouds being quite sufficient to make us sick and dizzy. It was not until evening that, fairly exhausted and stiff in every joint, with tongues parched for want of water, Peter, who had kept some little distance a-head, raised the native cry of "Coo-ee!" and, waving his cap, announced he had reached the summit. Gazing at it from the Waimea plains, it seems to converge to a point sharp as a needle; but when we were up there, we found a large plain of five or six hundred acres, deeply cut about by the snow-water, which has formed several wide canals in its passage. Not a blade of grass or stick of wood was to be seen, nor were there any signs of either animal or vegetable life, with the exception of a kind of lichen upon some of the rocks. Although we

were upon this plain, we involuntarily sat down and closed our eyes before we dared venture to look around and below. When we did, it seemed scarcely possible for two-footed animals to have climbed to the place on which we stood. But great was our disappointment in finding that it would be impossible for us to proceed on our journey; the descent we had hoped to have made into the Wairau on the morrow being far too precipitous to attempt. It was almost perpendicular, and seemed by some violent convulsion of nature to have been rent asunder from the range, forming a precipice of tremendous depth. It looked, as we might fancy the Mount of Olives will look at that day when "*His* feet shall stand upon it, and the Mount shall cleave in the midst thereof, toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a great valley." There was nothing to hold on to when we got to the edge, and the loose earth, rolling from under our feet, rendered it dangerous. We, therefore, dug a hole in the ground with our tomahawks, against the sides of which one of the party supported himself, and held the heels of the other, who crawled to the edge and looked over, and was then dragged back when he had seen sufficient. But, although we had failed in the immediate object of our journey, we felt well repaid for our labour, if only by the wondrously beautiful sight upon which we gazed that

evening. Far round as the eye could reach was an immense circle of hills, some steep and rugged, others undulating into valleys, through which silvery rivers were running, others losing themselves in the clouds. And there was the glorious sun sinking down behind the purple western ranges, suffusing all nature with a beautiful blush. Gossamer clouds were floating below us tinged with a golden glow, and the rich melodious concert of myriad birds came swelling up from the Bush, with the deep contralto of the tui and ka-ka, and the soprano of the canary and mocking-bird, blending so exquisitely, that it seemed as if on that mountain-top we were catching some of the strains of melody from the celestial choirs.

Night came on apace, and we were glad to wrap ourselves up in our blankets and lie down closely together in one of the dry water-cuttings, where we were partially protected from the cold keen wind, which blew across from the snowy peaks on the range. It was the 31st December, and our position certainly commanded an expansive view for *seeing* the old year out and the new year in. It was not difficult for the imagination to picture, in the silvery clouds which surrounded us, and through which the moonbeams were playing, the fair form of some herald angels announcing the birth of a new year; nor in the confused murmuring of rushing waters below, which rose

up like the sound of muffled drums, was it hard to imagine that Nature sang a funeral dirge, when the old year flapped its wings as it flew past into eternity. We pledged each other in a bottle of cold tea, which we had reserved for a case of emergency, and never was the seasonable toast of "A happy New Year" more heartily drunk, under similar circumstances, than it was by us.

Next morning we started off on our return journey, which we accomplished with greater ease, travelling through the Bush without difficulty, by following the broken branches which we had strewn as we passed through before, and guided by our bush-fires, which were still smouldering. We arrived home with trousers torn nearly off our legs, boots trodden down and cut to pieces, faces unshaven, and a general vagrant appearance, after a very pleasant holiday ramble.

A TRIP TO WELLINGTON.

THE Midsummer holidays gave me an opportunity of going to Wellington; and the little steamer, "Tasmanian Maid," belonging to the Nelson province, had made her arrangements exactly to further my plan of going and returning within a fortnight.

One beautiful morning in December, I found myself, in company with my carpet-bag, steaming out of Nelson Harbour. The society on board was very agreeable,—nearly all were Nelson people, and, as a matter of course, everybody knew everybody. The first event of any interest was entering the French Pass, about twenty miles from Nelson—an extremely narrow and dangerous passage, between rocks and reefs. It receives its name from having been discovered by some French voyagers, who made their head-quarters at an island closely adjacent. The scenery about the Pass is very beautiful; two concave reefs of rock form the passage, which is only

wide enough to admit a small vessel without bumping against them. To the right the Pelorus hills rise abruptly from the sea, rugged and densely wooded, above a perfect labyrinth of coves, bays, creeks, and harbours, of every size, sort, and capacity; and to the left, D'Urville's Island, a picturesque group of hills, uninhabited, except by a few Maories, who have a pah there. A large rock standing out in the sea hard by is called D'Urville's Castle. In the dusk of evening it looks like a massive fortification, the work of men's hands, with its turrets, towers, and port-holes, peeping through one of which is a very fair representation of a sentinel at his post. Another curious rock, called "The Brothers," if seen by the same deceptive light, looks exactly like two men rising from the water and affectionately embracing each other, with something of a dramatic effect.

Late in the evening the steamer put in at Waitohi, to land one or two passengers resident in that out-of-the-way place. Waitohi, at that time, belonged to the Nelson province, and so also did the Wairau, a large tract of pastoral land; but since then a great change has been effected, in consequence of a law in New Zealand which allows any district possessing 500,000 acres of land, 1,000 inhabitants, and a port of entry, to become a distinct province. The settlers in the Wairau petitioned the General Assembly for a

separation, much to the mortification of the inhabitants of Nelson; and that district is now metamorphosed into the province of Marlborough, with Picton, late Waitohi, as its capital. It has its own local Government, and all the ponderous machinery thereunto belonging. It promises to be a flourishing and influential place.

Next morning we were in Queen Charlotte's Sound. It is a gigantic ocean-dock, capable of berthing the whole British navy; about twenty-five miles long, with one entrance three, and another six miles broad. We were walled up on each side by thickly-bushed hills, which threw their deep shadows over the water. Now and again, between the openings, and among the innumerable little bays and coves, were fine patches of plain land, but not sufficiently extensive to be worth much for cultivation. The scenery all round about the Pelorus and Queen Charlotte's Sound is beautiful in the extreme. If Fennimore Cooper were to be writing about it, instead of me, he would spin out at least three good long chapters in its description.

Our next stoppage was at the Boulder Bank, in the Wairau Harbour, and here we were informed that two hundred sheep had to come on board for Wellington, which would delay the steamer for eight or ten hours. Some of the passengers agreed, there-

fore, to spend the time in exploring; and we succeeded in getting a boat, which we rowed up the Wairau River as far as a station called the Beaver—a distance of about nine miles. The Beaver and Boulder Bank are two ports from whence wool is shipped; and insignificant though the places are, they possess considerable notoriety, from the fact that the principal wool business is transacted there, and from thence the wool ships leave for the English markets. But the Beaver and Boulder have attained a notoriety of a different kind, and not so desirable to be possessed. The shepherds and others engaged on the sheep runs are attracted there after the shearing, and at shipping times; and however respectable these shepherds may be as a whole, there is a class among them by far the most dissipated and depraved in the colony, who infest the houses of accommodation, and bring reproach upon themselves and the locality.

Fast men, men about town, fools of the family, and others of the kind, often land in New Zealand; and as none but hard-working, persevering, and industrious men are required there, it follows that unless they have money—which is not often the case, or they would not be there—they must do something for a livelihood. Their resource is to go to the Wairau as shepherds; first, because they feel they are not

appreciated in colonial towns as they once were in Belgravia or Kensington; and, secondly, because for two-thirds of the year a shepherd's is a comparatively idle life, and requiring just about as much mental labour as they are capable of bestowing. Thrown amongst kindred in circumstances, they grow, of course, sympathetic in vice; and unrestrained by the softening influence of female society, living in their rude wharries, far away from the privileges and associations of civilised life, they soon sink down to a level from which in few instances they rise again. Smoking and drinking, swearing and gambling, constitute the staple of their recreations, varied by occasional visits to the Beaver and Boulder Bank, where there are public-houses, and, consequently, suitable companionship. Among this class, going to these places and "shouting" (which is another word for spending their evenings in drunken, disgraceful revelry, which lasts for a week or fortnight at a time), is considered the acmé of pleasure.

Our stay at the Beaver was very short, but we had sufficient evidence confirmatory of the state of society there to convince us that it was worthy its reputation. I never recollect to have seen a more pitiable and melancholy sight than I witnessed that morning. There were young men, fitted by education to hold the highest offices in the colony, lying about in the

shade, endeavouring to recover the effects produced by the previous night's debauchery; others, in groups, were playing at cards, or pitch and toss; while some were in a hopelessly imbecile state of intoxication, endeavouring to pick quarrels with everybody.

It must not be imagined that these remarks apply sweepingly to the Wairau shepherds. They do not; and it is to be hoped they apply now to a much less numerous class than existed then, as families are settling now in the country, and other influences are at work to raise the tone of society there, and render its moral reputation worthy its commercial.

We arrived that night in Wellington Harbour, which is one of the finest in New Zealand,—completely land-locked, and when entered in smooth weather, having the appearance of a large and beautiful lake. It is six miles in length, surrounded with low hills, densely wooded, rising from the edge of the water, and casting the shadows of the thick foliage upon the waves. The scene, as we neared the wharf, was one of the most novel kind with which I ever remember to have been impressed. The town of Wellington is built on the very margin of the water, at the western corner of the harbour, with all the houses facing the sea-lake, and describing a semi-circular line. At the back of this line of houses—which is the business part of the town, and

comprises only stores and warehouses—there rises a low range of hills, so abruptly that many of the houses at the foot of them are jammed into niches of the hills, which have been cut away for the purpose of admitting them. Upon these hills is a fine terrace, thickly studded with houses; in many instances these are the private residences of the storekeepers on the beach; and higher still, above the terrace, are the barracks and other buildings;—so that from the water it appears like three tiers of houses, on narrow terraces, one above the other.

Approaching the town by night, when the windows of the shops and houses are lighted up, it looks like a Cremorne or Rosherville scene on a large scale, with its three rows of illuminations, each two or three miles long, casting their reflections on the gentle waves, and producing a very striking effect in contrast to the sombre-looking hills. There were fourteen vessels in the harbour when we entered, which made it so late before we could get to the jetty that we were obliged to remain on board that night.

The greatest need after a voyage, whether long or short, is to get to some comfortable quarters, have a nap, then a good wash, clean shave, and change of garments, and finally discuss a quiet, steady meal, which in a small steamer is a sheer impossibility. This I did at Thomas's Hotel, upon the Terrace,

decidedly the best place in Wellington to get good fare, good apartments, and comfortable society, at a reasonable expense.

Taking a first glance at Wellington, it seems to be a much larger place than it really is, from the fact that the streets are all laid out to the best advantage, and, provided you stand in a commanding position, one glance takes them all in. But, considering that Wellington was the first settlement founded by the New Zealand Company, that it is some years older than Auckland, the seat of Government, and that it occupies one of the most central and influential positions in the whole colony, I admit I was disappointed in not finding it in a more advanced state than it is. But Wellington labours under disadvantages which will always prevent its occupying any very prominent position. First, it possesses no agricultural districts near the town, which is one of the greatest drawbacks to any settlement; secondly, it has a very large native population, and at the present time, and probably for years to come, this will be a sufficient obstacle to retard its progress. Thirdly, it is more subject to earthquakes than any other part in New Zealand; and, although the settlers do not seem apprehensive of much evil resulting from their occurrence, still they have been the means of driving away many from the province, and preventing more from settling there.

Fourthly, it is situated at the mouth of Cook's Straits, and is frequently visited with tremendous gales of wind, and heavy continuous rains, which cause frequent and destructive floods. Nevertheless, Wellington holds a prominent commercial position, and to those who can confine their imaginations to such limits, is regarded as the Liverpool of the Southern Britain,

The town abounds with tasteful houses, mostly wooden, with gables, and green verandahs, surrounded with gardens, in which the acacia, blue gum, and mimosa trees abound. The public buildings are not equal to those in some of the other provinces, owing to the earthquakes, which affect solid and substantial buildings so much as to render them unsafe; but there is an amount of taste displayed in their architecture and general construction which gives them a very good appearance.

The Houses of Parliament are plain but good, and well fitted up inside. There is a large oil-painting in the hall, by a Wellington artist, of Dr. Featherstone and two Maori chiefs, one on either side. The Bank is a very neat building, with a portico and pillars; so also is the Church, with its three gables, in the centre of which is a clock.

A very pretty drive is from Wellington to the Valley of the Hutt, a distance of about nine miles;

but the road is a very dangerous one, being a cutting on the hill-side, with a steep bank down to the sea. It is a serpentine road, and so narrow that two carts have difficulty to pass each other, frequently being obliged to back some distance to a wider place; the turnings, too, are so sudden, that vehicles would run into each other were it not that the drivers generally carry whistles, which they sound before turning the corners, as a warning to any who may be coming the other way. There are vans plying between the Hutt and Wellington, and on the day before I visited the place an accident had occurred in consequence of the van-horses shying at something in the road, and all went topsy-turvy down the bank into the tide-way, with very serious, though not fatal, consequences. But dangerous places are generally the most beautiful, as beautiful people are generally the most dangerous, and the drive is one of complete loveliness.

At the commencement of the Hutt Valley is a Maori pah, with divers strange wharries and store-rooms, fenced in with double palisading of eight or ten feet high, and lashed with the native flax. Every three or four yards round the palisade are long posts, about a foot in diameter, ornamented with some grotesque carving at the tops.

The Valley has no very extensive area of available land for cultivation, but what it has is used to the

best advantage, every inch being occupied with gardens and orchards, neat farms and good grazing paddocks, with well-favoured kine. But the frequent floods are the bane of the place, washing away the gardens, destroying the crops, and disheartening the inhabitants from cultivating. A few months prior to my visit a heavy flood had taken place, and there was scarcely a house in the valley but bore its water-mark some two or three feet high, showing how universal and destructive the flood had been. During that time the course of the river had been altered, and the bridge which was originally designed to cross it was standing over a dry river-bed, while passengers had to cross the "new" river in canoes and carts. Heaps of rubbish and branches of trees were washed up in stacks against the banks and other prominent obstructions, there remaining as memorials.

The public buildings in the Hutt are few—a church, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic chapels, and a Courthouse being the principal.

Returning to Wellington in the evening, I visited the Literary Institution, and was agreeably surprised to find so large, commodious, and well-regulated an association, which deserves the full support given to it. Here balls, concerts, lectures, and evening classes are held during the winter months; the library is well supplied with a carefully-selected and useful

stock of books, and the reading-room is furnished with all the principal English and colonial magazines, journals, and reviews.

I also attended a political meeting that night, but not having the clue to Wellington politics, I left in as great a maze as I entered, although, to judge from the excitement of the speakers, the heart-and-soul ecstacies of some of the audience when the men on their side of the question spoke, and the obstinate perseverance in hissing and groaning which prevailed among the opposite side, I imagined it must be some very weighty and important matter, in which the vital interests of the colony were affected. But I was informed by the friend who accompanied me that it was not a political meeting at all, only one regarding some new wharf, or jetty, which it was proposed should be built; but political excitement was so necessary to the very existence of the Wellingtonians, that that element was invariably introduced into all their meetings, to keep them in practice and "up to the mark," especially in dull seasons, when their zeal might wax cold.

This I discovered, before I had been a week in Wellington, to be substantially correct; never was there another such place in the world for hot politics, strong party-ships, and intense officialism. To such an extent is it carried, that sometimes individuals of

one party will not deal with individuals of the other; and if, to avoid this dilemma, the peace-making storekeeper or tradesman remain neutral, he is sure to be scouted by both sides. Nor is it confined to things secular, but the ministers of religion dabble in the same stream, and of course soil themselves with the dirty water. Should Wellington be made the seat of Government, instead of Auckland, and take rank as the political metropolis of the colony, as is expected, having the Governor and his Liliputian court occasionally resident there, and all the parliamentary paraphernalia, it requires the prescience of a prophet accustomed to weigh the destinies of General Assemblies, to predict its political future.

There are always a great number of natives in and about Wellington, who carry on an extensive trade with the Europeans in fish, potatoes, and articles of Maori manufacture. Some of these natives are very aristocratic, and it is exceedingly amusing to see the way in which they imitate European manners and habits. This, in a great measure, is the cause of their rapid decline; for in New Zealand, as in every place where the white man goes, the black man dies out before him. "Rum and blankets" is the secret of their decrease; one day faring sumptuously, imbibing stimulants, living in houses, and dressed in the fashion—for weeks afterwards wandering in the Bush

with a rug or blanket as a covering, subsisting on the meanest food, and sleeping in the open air.

The natives are very fond of horses, and many of them possess some of the finest in the colony. It is very diverting to see the native "pretty horse-breakers" riding about in the town, dressed in handsome riding habits, and smart jaunty-looking caps with feathers, but generally exposing a bare leg, without shoe or stocking, in the stirrup! Some will be promenading the streets with parasols and smart cloaks, and perhaps a red blanket as a dress; while others will ape the English ladies in every article of dress, save only and except crinoline, which even a half-savage despises.

It is remarkable with what fluency the Maories speak the English language in the towns, when they are brought much in contact with the settlers; and it reflects anything but honour upon the English, that so few can address half-a-dozen sentences to the Maori in his own tongue, although it is infinitely more easy for them to acquire, than is our language for the natives.

The Maori language has only fourteen letters, A E H I K M N O P R T U W and NG. This latter has a sound peculiar to itself, and is best pronounced by Europeans when suffering from influenza.

I went one evening to a public meeting of the

natives at a village not far from Wellington (I forget the name of the place, and if I remembered I should not be able to spell it), which was convened to discuss the Maori King movement. Although I could not understand two words in a hundred they said, I was nevertheless deeply interested in the Korero. The Maori has no sympathy with our ministers and public speakers, who stand still to address an audience; they always have a large space cleared, some thirty or forty yards long, in which they can give full play to the body, without which they fail to produce argument for the tongue.

They are always most fluent when most heated by the *exercise* of their oratory. Should the excitement of walking backwards and forwards, and making frantic gestures, hurrying from imaginary foes, or parrying off unknown spirits, not prove effectual in generating a speech, the Maori does not deem it irrelevant to the occasion to indulge in a dance, or introduce a song which may or may not bear upon the point at issue. This very often gives a clue to some ideas, and when the speech is fairly commenced, it is generally of the most protracted character. The speaker will walk the length of the arena talking as he goes, but walking back meditating in silence the sentence to be used on his next walk down the platform.

But their meetings except on rare occasions are not

so much to make set speeches, as to discuss subjects, and their fluency in debate is marvellous—often taking many hours to arrive at a point; but when it is gained, it remains for ever, as the law of the Medes and Persians which cannot be altered.

I stayed a considerable time to listen to their discussion on the evening in question, and when I left, my friends assured me they were only just getting into the spirit of the meeting; but being in the dark as to the import of their speeches, I did not care to remain to the end. Throughout the time I had stayed my interest had not flagged for a moment, and I enjoyed a highly entertaining, although perfectly unintelligible evening's amusement.

After staying in Wellington a few days, the "Tasmanian Maid" was to return to Nelson, and I determined to go back with her, as no other chance of returning would occur for a fortnight. She was delayed three days in harbour after the advertised time of sailing, in consequence of one of the most violent gales I ever recollect to have known on land, but which the Wellingtonians assured me was only a "zephyr." Nevertheless, during those days, divers chimney pots were scattered about the streets, fences were torn down, fragile wooden buildings were put out of their perpendiculars, horses refused to face the wind, and only a few individuals, the victims of

necessity, were to be seen abroad, and those fighting frantically, and at disastrous odds with the enemy.

On the third evening of the gale I walked, or attempted to walk along the jetty to the steamer; but having got to where the wind blows across from an opening in the clay hills, I was positively afraid to go a step further, and sat down on the pier, catching hold of the trams to prevent being blown away. While meditating whether discretion was not the greater part of valour, and whether it would not be better to retrace my steps, fortunately one or two persons happened to come past;—we all went together arm-in-arm, and arrived safely on the vessel, proving the truth of the motto, "Unity is Strength."

The steamer got away early the next morning, but when we reached the mouth of the harbour, a terrible sea was before us, every wave of which seemed capable of shivering the poor little "Maid" to atoms. For half-an-hour she was steaming every breath in her body, and struggling with the elements in trying to get out of the harbour—one minute rearing up as if meditating a back somersault, and the next "tucking in her twopenny" as school boys say, while the waves played leap-frog over her. My advice to all New Zealand excursionists is, never get into Cook's Straits in a small vessel during a gale, if you can help it. For twenty-four hours we were

pitching and tossing about, inundated with the spray, and every moment expecting a catastrophe. I, who had never been sea-sick before, not even in the voyage from England, spent five weary hours in the most profound misery, its hopeless victim—nor was I singular in this respect; not one of the passengers took a meal at the table during the passage, but all were fellow-sufferers with the "curse of travel."

ON THE RANGES.

EARLY one morning in the beautiful month of October, when the spring was fast losing itself in summer, and nature's face was all radiant with smiles, our party, consisting of five persons, started off on a pedestrian tour. Our costumes were of divers primitive fashions, not being studied for appearance, but ease and comfort. The prevailing style was, a pair of good water-tight boots, corduroy trousers, and a blue slop, fastened with a belt, from which hung a strong knife and a tin pannikin. One of the party, who had not been long in the colony, and whose notions of deportment were rather more dignified than ours, would persist in wearing a coat—which relic of civilization caused him great inconvenience and many a groan throughout the journey. Our knapsacks, or swags, as they are more generally called, each contained a pair of blankets, Crimean shirt, biscuits, tea, sugar, and a tolerably good supply of powder and shot. These were fastened to our back

with a pair of slings called "coveys," which are made by the natives of dressed flax. Two of us took guns, and carried them by turns to relieve one another—a task readily undertaken, as, besides contributing much to the pleasure of the trip by occasional sport on the road, the wants of our inward men were dependent upon them for food.

The first day's march was not one of much interest, as we were all the way within the bounds of civilization, with tolerably good roads and houses or farms, and at intervals a small village to pass. These, however, were situated like the much-talked-of but seldom-known visits of the angels, and were a relief to the monotony of clay hills and high fern which characrerized that part of the country. The point of destination for that day was the village of Riwaka, a distance of about thirty miles; and here we arrived at ten o'clock in the evening. Riwaka is a beautiful little place, situated in a valley, with a magnificent range of mountains rising almost perpendicularly around it, and inhabited almost exclusively by farmers, whose neat and flourishing properties are almost unrivalled in the settlement. Riwaka is another of those rare places in New Zealand possessing an interesting historic association; and why I lay stress upon the association of places with past events is, because none of my readers know what a loss it is

to live in a country without such associations but those who have felt it. In England, there is not a town or village but has its legend, or its place in history; in London, not a street but is rendered memorable by some stirring event—there, the very "dust we tread once breathed," and every house has a memoir; but in New Zealand you may travel from north to south, and east to west, and find nothing to stir up thrilling remembrances in an Englishman's heart; no traditions, save those wild fables of marvellous natives, or horrid details of scenes of bloodshed which only disgust and irritate to recall to memory.

Riwaka, then, is remarkable, and rendered famous by only a very minor historic event, and bearing interest only to the colonists. Here it was that Captain Wakefield, the surveyors, and eighty picked men, who formed the preliminary expedition for the formation of the Nelson settlement, landed in 1841. Here were their rude huts pitched; and from this place they wandered forth on exploring expeditions, until the tidal harbour was found, and the site of Nelson fixed. Then they were joined in three months by their wives and families, who endured such hardships as have been stated in their first encampment by the Salt-water Bridge. At Riwaka we intended to stay for the night, and claim the hospitality of

some farmer in the place, as a good sound sleep in a comfortable bed is better than lying in the open air, and is more appreciated after the first day's hard walking, when stiffness is most felt, than it is at any other period in a journey.

Although we had reckoned without our host, in one sense of the motto, about getting a "shake-down," we were not disappointed; for seeing a snug little homestead at the foot of the mountain-range we intended to ascend on the morrow, we made our way thither. It was a nice clean white house, with a pretty verandah, standing in the midst of a fine garden and orchard, and enclosed with a high hawthorn hedge; a sight which some of our party had not seen since they left home—that is, England. Arriving at that late hour we had to knock several times before receiving an answer, as the inhabitants had all gone to bed. Presently a night-capped head was popped out of an adjoining window, and we were saluted with "Who be yer?" Stating that we were travellers wanting a night's rest, we were told forthwith to open the latch and walk in; and in a few minutes were joined by our host, who, in the kindness of his heart, brought a candle before allowing himself time to perform any arrangement of toilette. Having asked whether we could be accommodated, we were told "Ees, to be zure," in a tone of surprise that such a

question should ever have been mooted, and were welcomed as heartily as if we had been his friends for years. The old man was evidently glad to see strangers, although at that unseasonable hour, and going back to his room we heard him say to the gude wife, "Turn out, old 'ooman! here be five on 'em come to zee us." This request was acceded to with alacrity, for in less than half an hour we were sitting round the fire enjoying our pipes with the host, while our hostess was busying herself in frying some ham and eggs for supper. We soon fell to, and discussed the news of the province and the meal with a mutual relish. There was only one spare room—the sole furniture of which was a bed, a Dutch clock with a bass voice, and several sides of bacon round the walls. We drew lots who should occupy this room, and the lot fortunately fell upon two of the party less accustomed to roughing it than the rest; an arrangement having been made satisfactorily for the rest of us, we curled ourselves up in our blankets, and had as sweet a sleep as ever mortals had on beds of down. Next morning, the crowing of cocks and lowing of cattle roused our dormant senses, and by six o'clock all were astir. Milking operations commenced, and a welcome musical strain issued from the kettle and frying-pan, announcing that breakfast was getting ready. When the meal was over, we again strapped

on our knapsacks, and having given our hearty thanks for the kindness we had received, started off like giants refreshed.

And now commenced the real pleasure of the journey. Our course lay over a mountain-range which divides the Riwaka from the Takaka valleys, and is an arm of the gigantic chain which has been very appropriately termed the Southern Alps, of which Mount Cook is one of the highest eminences, being nearly equal in height to Mont Blanc, and towering above the rest, crowned with perpetual snow, and glistening with ravines of glacier ice. These Southern Alps run in long parallel chains, divided by deep longitudinal valleys, and broken at right angles by rocky gorges, forming the great back-bone of the Southern Island, and running from N.N.E. to S.S.W., and from strait to strait. Two arms of this stupendous chain are sent forth through the Nelson province, the extremities of which are washed by Cook's Straits; these are again sub-divided by longitudinal valleys into numerous ranges, with peaks from five to six thousand feet high.

Over these ranges, then, our excursion led us; and the particular point which we had to ascend is named Pikikerunga, — translated literally from the Maori, it means, "Get up, if you can." The track was not sufficiently well formed for travellers unused to

the country to be very likely to follow correctly; however, we had a couple of pocket-compasses with us, and in the bush through which we should have to travel we knew that plenty of food, such as birds and wild pigs, was to be found, if we should happen to lose ourselves. Full of pleasure at the prospect of rambling through the wild and undisturbed solitudes, we started on our journey.

In making the ascent of a mountain, the first thousand feet is generally the worst part of the whole—more especially when the commencement is very rocky and abrupt, as in this instance it was. We were able to follow the track for some time, and after several rests and a little light refreshment in the shape of a pipe, gained the first spur of the range, when to our disappointment we found the track we had pursued was not the one that travellers who had gone the journey before had used, but the workmanship of some wild goats, that were frisking and sporting on the surrounding slopes, and stopped a moment to gaze upon us, before making a precipitate retreat from the invaders of their quietude. We therefore had to beat through the high fern for some distance; but this was very tiring work, more especially as the sun was beginning to come out in his strength, and the seed and dust of the fern, rising up as we pushed through it, nearly suffocated us. We had nothing

to allay the irritation in our throats, having brought only a small flask of brandy each, which we were desirous to save in case of real emergency. We resorted to the usual expedient of firing the fern to get free; and as a good strong sea-breeze was blowing, we rested on some rocks while the destroying element cleared our passage. And heartily we enjoyed being seated there. Beneath our feet was stretched out, like a map, the beautiful and fertile Moutere and Waimea plains, with their rural and picturesque villages surrounded with cultivations. Above and beside us towered Mount Arthur and the other snow-capped peaks, and all round the horizon were innumerable mountains and hills raising their heads one above the other, seeming emulous of noble Ben Nevis, who towered above them all.

While we were seated there some goats bounded above us at no great distance, and imagining by the speed they travelled that there must be some clear passage, we followed on after them, and found ourselves at last in the right track. The range was not one continuous ascent; no sooner had we attained an elevation of a thousand or fifteen hundred feet than we had to descend a deep precipitous valley of about five to eight hundred feet, and so on, up and down, never seeming to get any farther on our journey. This was a relief in one respect, as it made a change

from the perpetual trudge up hill, and brought other muscles into play; but was a disappointment also, as we expected each descent must surely be the last. This way, however, had to be pursued, as it was the only place where the mountain could be crossed, the snow forming a barrier everywhere else.

Up hill and down dale—here a mass of rock beautifully overgrown with rich velvet-looking moss; beyond, a precipitous descent commanding a comprehensive view of valleys, with winding rivers looking like silver threads drawn through the bright evergreens—brought us at length to the second spur, which, at a rough guess, we thought to be about an elevation of five thousand feet; and here we determined to enjoy a little rest, which is only really pleasurable when earned by labour. It was three o'clock in the afternoon—the reason why we chose this fashionable hour for dining being because this was the first time we had come across any water since starting. Our meal consisted of some ka-kas, a kind of large brown parrot, "with a note like his name pronounced by a cabman with a cold," which abounds in the New Zealand Bush, and is first-rate eating, especially to hungry travellers. These we had shot on our journey; and we lost no time, when our fire was made, in skinning them, which is the easiest way of getting off the feathers, running them through with sticks,

one end of which was stuck in the ground, and the other end, with the bird on it, pointed to the fire. Our pannikins with water were put on to boil, in order that we might enjoy the luxury of some tea, which, however much it is proverbially relished by washerwomen, is much more so by excursionists. Epicures who live at home at ease know little of the enjoyment of a meal compared with those who, with a good appetite produced by healthful recreation and fatigued by an eight hours' journey, sit down on the ground surrounded by the wild grandeur of nature, drink tea out of tin pots without milk, and eat birds cooked in a manner which would have reduced their French cooks to hysterics. While we were smoking our pipes after dinner and admiring the thousand-and-one natural beauties in shrubs and ferns around us, one of our companions, who had been strolling about in search of the picturesque, came, full of excitement, to tell us he had made a discovery. We followed him till he came to a large tree which had fallen across the mouth of a hole about fifteen feet in diameter. We looked down it, but saw nothing save rocky ledges and darkness visible. With our united strength we managed to move aside part of the tree in order to get nearer, and brought as large a piece of loose rock as we could carry, which we threw down to try and obtain an idea

of its depth. Down it went, knocking from ledge to ledge, and the sound growing fainter and fainter until it ceased altogether. Whether it lodged, or reached the bottom we could not tell; so we amused ourselves for upwards of an hour endeavouring to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, but failed. We were unable to account for the formation. One suggested that it was the mouth of a very old and extinct volcano; another, that it was the result of an earthquake; although both these notions became unsettled with us again as, upon pursuing our journey, we found at least half-a-dozen similar openings, none of which had the appearance of being rent, and none seemed to have any bottom, but were like mammoth wells, which—by the sound of the stones and pieces of rock we threw down—seemed to widen the further they went. Whether there were immense caverns below, which is highly probable, is unknown, for although many travellers have since gone that way, none have had the temerity to be lowered down by ropes to make the discovery. We were, therefore, obliged to rest satisfied with what we had seen, and come to the conclusion that, as we could not find the bottom and provided they went far enough, it would be a very expeditious mode of getting to the antipodes—our homes in England. Most probably these funnel-shaped pits have been hollowed out by

the action of water, which has dissolved the limestone of which the range is principally composed.

Refreshed by our halt, we started on to gain the summit of the mountain; it rose before us like a wall, and seemed to repeat to us its name, "Get up if you can." The ascent had to be made almost on hands and knees, over rude pieces of rock, and loose crumbling limestone; this was rendered a hard task by reason of a heavy fall of rain, which continued for several hours.

Arrived at the mountain's summit, had the weather been propitious, we should doubtless have had a beautiful view of the Takaka Valley, stretched at our feet, and the bold Anatoki Mountains beyond; as it was, a thick mist enveloped us, and hid objects at a hundred yards' distance. There is a novelty in being "alone upon the mountain top," above the floating clouds, and far removed from the haunts of man; and had we seen any prospect of the rain abating, we should have camped there for the night, in order to have fully enjoyed it; but sleeping out in the wet, with little probability of getting a good fire, chills poetic ardour, and we resolved to descend to the Takaka Valley, and visit some friends who had recently erected a wharri, and had settled down there to farm. It is famous fun descending a mountain, especially on a wet day, when the clay and loose lime-

stone are made slippery, and render it necessary to exercise as much skill as in skating to preserve an equilibrium. The best way is to run at a tolerable rate, digging the heels well into the ground, and making up one's mind for an occasional fall. The ascent had taken us from seven in the morning till six in the evening, eleven hours' good hard walking and climbing, while the descent into the valley was accomplished in three hours; and we arrived at the bank of the Takaka River at about nine in the evening, just as darkness began to set in. We were in doubt as to the possibility of crossing the river, which, being fed from the mountains, rises to a great height almost immediately after the rain has melted the snow, and there being neither bridge or canoe to cross it, the disagreeable necessity remained of wading through. This is one of the great drawbacks to New Zealand—the number of rivers, and the difficulty of crossing them; and of the many accidental deaths which have occurred within the last few years, three-fifths have been occasioned in attempting to wade rivers—the Wairau particularly. We each provided ourselves with a good strong manuka pole, which we cut at the edge of the bush, and, having tied more firmly our packages and guns to our backs, commenced to cross. Some people prefer taking off their boots and stockings, in order to prosecute the re-

mainder of their journey with dry feet, but we had all learnt from experience that the better plan is to keep everything on and trudge through, as the sharp loose boulder-stones not only hurt the feet, but often occasion a fall, which is very dangerous, as it is almost impossible to swim in so swift a current; besides, the snow-water is bitterly cold, and is parent to rheumatism, sciatica, and cramp. Not knowing the best fords of the river, we had to make some half-dozen ineffectual attempts to cross, but finding that night was fast overtaking us, we resolved, as soon as we found anything like a reasonable depth, that we would go on at all hazards, as otherwise, if the rain continued, we might be detained several days. The best swimmer was appointed leader, and we let him be free from any burden, in case he should step beyond his depth. We all followed, and soon found ourselves waist-deep, and the current so strong as to require the utmost of our strength to stand against, more particularly as the stones at the bottom were also moved by the force of the water, and swept away our foot-hold. One of the party (our new chum, who would wear a coat), not being used to river-wading, got giddy when he had reached the middle, and declared he should fall, and could not go a step further; when, losing both his nerve and balance at the same time, he was carried off his feet and floated down the

river. Our leader made a dart after him, and fortunately seized hold of the swag attached to his back, but being unable to right himself in the rapidity of the movement, they floated on together, until a shallow fall providentially stopped them, where they "brought up," very much bruised. We all reached the other side in safety, and, after wringing our clothes, and drinking long life to our drenched and now nervously-excited friend, in the brandy which we had very prudently reserved for any occasion of the kind, we started once more into the Bush to find out the wharri of our friends in the valley. A ramble through the Bush, when the bright sunshine is dancing through the boughs, and the birds are carolling above, and the clear blue sky peeps through the foliage, is very delightful; but a ramble on a pitch-dark night, with the rain pouring down in torrents and the wind howling through the trees, is altogether a different matter. The only beauty in the Bush on such a night is to see the decayed wood, which shines with a beautiful phosphorescent light, like innumerable glow-worms. We tried in vain to find anything dry enough to make a torch, and shouted "Coo-ee!" to the tops of our voices, in the hopes that we might be near some dwelling; but failing in this also, we pushed through the dripping brushwood, stumbling over rotten trees, and falling into holes made by the

wild pigs, until at last we found the track. Then the difficulty to keep it when found was as great as the finding.

At eleven o'clock, we got out into an open piece of fern land, and were rejoiced to see, at no great distance, the wharri of our friends. They were two youths, both under twenty years of age, who had settled there on their father's property, and were trying to reclaim the wilderness, and cultivate it for agricultural purposes. As we approached the hut, we adopted, as well as we could, the Maori nasal twang, and shouted to each other all the native words we could cull from our limited vocabularies; our friends came out to welcome us in rather an alarmed state, imagining that the natives had risen in a body, and were invading their unprotected premises. We soon dissipated their fears, and were not long before we found ourselves round a good log-fire, drying our blankets, and cooking some bacon for supper. Fortunately, we found some dry fern, of which we made very comfortable beds for the night, and enjoyed heartily

"Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep."

IN THE BUSH.

THE next morning proved to us that we had done well in crossing the river on the previous evening, and seeking the sheltering roof of our friends; for the rain had continued throughout the night to pour hard and steadily, and we knew that all the rivers must have risen, and hemmed us in. About daybreak we rose, for the rain was descending with increased violence, and we found that little pools of water were forming on the uneven ground upon which the wharri was built, not possessing the refined luxury of a boarded floor. Fearful lest we should not keep the firewood dry, we bestirred ourselves to remove it to a place of safety, and have it ready for use, as we felt sure we should not be able to stir abroad perhaps for the next day or two, as the New Zealand heavy rains almost invariably last for three days.

The site of the wharri could not have been more

beautiful. It was within a short distance of the broad Takaka River, and beside a clear crystal lake, with every variety of vegetation on its banks; while all around was dense and almost impenetrable bush, terminated by high mountain ranges. The bush up the river had only been explored for a mile or two, and all beyond was the unknown wilderness. But it was, essentially, a fine-weather spot, and nothing could appear more desolate and dreary than it did on this morning. We had hoped that towards noon the violence of the rain might abate; but in this we were disappointed. It only increased the more, and we noticed that the pools it formed in the hollows of the ground began to unite. By-and-by something like a current was passing from one to the other, and we set to work to dig a small channel, to let the water run off the level on which the house was situated, to a little undulation, or terrace, which led to the garden. Presently the sky became fearfully overcast and darkened,—so much so that we unanimously declared we had never seen anything like it before, while the sun was above the horizon. Up to this time we had been laughing and joking, and calmly smoking our pipes, not regarding the matter as in any way serious, although our friends did once or twice say—"they wished to goodness their wharri had been pitched just half-a-mile farther from the river, and on higher

ground." But suddenly our merriment was hushed by a sharp flash of lightning, which, for the instant, illumined the whole landscape, and was followed instantaneously by a crashing peal of thunder, which roared its echoes from mountain to mountain, till it died away. Immediately after the rain descended with such violence that it seemed as if the windows of heaven were opened. With considerable agitation our friends announced to us that the river had burst its banks, and we could hear it sweeping along in the bush with inconceivable fury. Crash upon crash of the appalling thunder now seemed to be shaking the very foundations of the earth, and rending the vaults of heaven. The roar was augmented by the falling of riven trees, which fell on all sides; but more awful even than the thunder, or the fierce lightning, was the rain, which now seemed like one sheet of water. We soon found that we must arouse ourselves to action; the wharri was getting ankle-deep in water, and threatening, if not to carry away the slabs of which the tenement was made, at least to bear off every moveable article it contained. Some ran out into the rain to collect and bring in all axes, billhooks, garden appliances, and other portable things they could find about, to prevent their being carried away by the flood, which was beginning to rush past; others of us hastily constructed benches

and shelves, on which to remove as much of the furniture as possible, to keep dry.

Scarcely had we done this when the overflooded river came hurrying on with such velocity that in a very short space of time the water, which had only been ankle-deep in the uneven places, was sweeping along through the wharri, carrying away with it the last embers of our fire, and every light article upon the floor. Our friends looked upon the scene without with feelings of bitter disappointment and sorrow. There was their garden, upon which they had expended infinite pains, being washed away; the flood not only carrying off everything that had been planted, but taking, also, every inch of soil along with it. There was the potato field, upon which they were depending for vegetables for the winter, entirely destroyed; and there were fences, which had taken weeks of hard labour to chop and set up, being hurled down and carried away.

Towards evening the rain subsided, and changed into a soft mizzle; but the flood, for some time after, continued to keep at the same height. We were all wet through and through, for the unsubstantial wharri afforded poor protection on such a day; and therefore, as none of us had ever seen a river in what the settlers there call a "freshet," we determined to wade through the water till we came to a hill-side, about

half-a-mile off, and follow that until we could obtain a view of the river. It was a wonderful sight, and one that none of us would have believed had we not seen. That noble river, which only twenty-four hours ago we had crossed on foot, and which then ran smoothly and calmly, visiting its tributaries, and returning the graceful bows of the stately trees with musical acknowledgments, was now one wild sea, madly rushing along, as if danger were behind, and it must escape. On came the mighty water, roaring with the hoarse laugh of fear, and shrieking as it dashed against protruding rocks, and then chuckling at its liberation;—now pouring over steep and rugged falls, and rushing through creeks and valleys, which had long lain dry, baptising the massive boulders that had almost forgotten the cheering element, and wandering amid mossy groves, where the wondering trees shook their heads in surprise at the unexpected visitant. The rate at which the waters in the river rushed past made us turn giddy, and we soon returned to the wharri, to try and arrange ourselves for the night. By ten o'clock the rain entirely ceased, and the moon rose above the forest trees, and looked down upon the scene of desolation. We had no fire, the water had not retreated, improvidently we had a scarcity of food, for all the bread had been eaten during the day, and the meat in the

house was uncooked,—so, wrapping ourselves in our blankets, and disposing ourselves on shelves and benches as we best could, we managed to get through the night.

This must not be taken as a usual event in New Zealand, or at any rate in the Nelson province. None of us ever recollected such an occasion before, and only one similar has taken place since, after a lapse of nearly four years since the one described.

We rose next morning not much refreshed, but delighted to find that the water had subsided,—so much that by cutting a small channel we could drain out the wharri, an operation which we soon accomplished. The sun shining brightly, we exposed some wood in its rays, and soon were able to get a fire alight, to cook our morning's meal, which was literally a breakfast. During that day we were obliged to remain indoors, the ground still being flooded outside in places, and everywhere very muddy; but we did not spend the day in the do-nothing manner which is usual to settlers in rainy weather, for we found plenty to occupy our time in assisting to effect household arrangements which the previous day had unsettled.

In the wet summer seasons the inhabitants of the Bush are plagued unmercifully with those most blood-thirsty of all insects—mosquitoes. People who have

only suffered from their envenomed bites in towns can form no possible conception of their occasional number and virulence in the Bush; and when it is taken into consideration that each of these inhuman little monsters is capable of extracting blood through the hide of a bullock, our nightly work during the continuance of the damp weather was one unceasingly painful warfare, in which the mosquitoes obtained a signal victory. Nothing is more vexatious than to fight with such foes; be the party attacked ever so expert, or ever so valiant a warrior, or ever so experienced a general, the tactics of the enemy are certain to excel his. In the small of the back, where the hand cannot easily reach, they love to revel; or a skirmishing party will attack the calves of the legs, while others are touching their victim up about the eyelids, requiring both hands at each place at once. We were obliged for two or three nights to well beat out the wharri with large fans of fern, burn manure and other things to smoke them out, and then wrap ourselves from head to foot in our blankets, not daring to expose our heads from under cover, although the nights were close and sultry.

Our appetites being remarkably good, and our hosts' larder being the very reverse, we started off on the fourth morning of our stay with them on a pig-hunting expedition. The ancestors of the present

wild pigs were turned out by Captain Cook, in the year 1773; since which time they have been strictly fulfilling the injunction to "increase and multiply," and have spread throughout the islands. Takaka Valley seems their peculiar home, and the immense number there have rooted up the whole surface of the land, and made it what farmers call "sweet" for immediate cultivation; a very great boon to settlers, who generally have to turn up the land and let it lie fallow some time before use. Captain Cook could never have over-estimated the immense amount of good he did in turning those pigs adrift. In the early days of the colony, when the first expedition parties were there, before the introduction of sheep and cattle, the wild pork was their staff of life; and many of even the recent settlers, when far removed from a port or neighbours, have made it for long years their principal diet. To lovers of sport the boon has been equally great, as these and goats—which are confined only to a few localities—are the only wild animals to hunt. Pig-hunting is an amusement, however, only suited to those who can appreciate a good day's hard-working pleasure. Sometimes many miles of bush may have to be traversed before you can start one, and then it is oftentimes a matter of difficulty to secure the prize. On this occasion we unfortunately had no dogs to assist us; they gene-

rally do the worst of the work by holding the pig by the ears until the hunters come up to complete the destruction. We had travelled some miles, and were seated on a large fallen tree in a picturesque gully, with a laughing stream at our feet and precipitous hills on each side, relishing some "damper" and cheese, when a loud grunt on the hill above us arrested our attention, and we saw a fine old boar, with tusks like ram's horns, coming down the hill full charge. One of the party who had a gun at hand jumped on the fallen tree to command a good shot, and fired; but in his trepidation missing his aim, the boar passed under the brushwood, made a dash at him on the tree, and both fell over together. The old motto of "one man's meat being another man's poison," held good in principle on this occasion. Our friend's fall was the means of our success; the impetus of the pig was stopped, and we had time to draw our knives and fall upon our victim, well perforating him with wounds without loss of powder and shot. We cut it up on the spot, awarding a tusk each to the two who had first struck it; and all bearing a portion of the slain we bent our way towards the wharri.

That night, as we were lying on our fern beds, one of the party awoke, and perceiving a peculiar appearance in the room, roused us all to know what it was.

It seemed as if the place were illumined with continuous lightning, which blazed instead of flashed, or as if the day were dawning in some unusual way; but upon looking at our watches we found this could not be the case as it was only two o'clock. We got up, and then a sight presented itself which few of us had ever seen before, and which none who have once seen can ever forget. It was that singular and beautiful phenomenon, the Aurora Australis, rising in the shape of a low and long-extended arch of pale pink light, and throwing out luminous and richly coloured rays, flashing incessantly and brilliantly, illuminating heaven and earth, and casting a variety of tints upon the rich and graceful foliage of the Bush.

The weather had now become settled, and our friends, whose arduous work had been brought to a stand-still for a day or two, were anxious to commence again. As we were ignorant of the usual routine of Bush-life, we begged they would not regard us as visitors, but set us to work while we stayed with them. We shouldered our axes and other tools, and proceeded with them one morning to the scene of their labours. Of all sights in the world, the one most likely to daunt a stout heart, and to infect a resolute spirit with despondency, that of a newly chopped tract of bush-land certainly carries the palm. Hundreds of vast and ponderous trees covering the

ground for acres—like the mighty slain on a field of battle—all to be removed before the solitary settler can raise a meal of potatoes, seems to offer the most hopeless task which the industry of man can struggle with. But our friends were young and full of hope, and the noble independence of proprietorship gave a zest to their labours; but it seemed to us, who could not so well enter into their feelings, that Noah must have been about as happy and composed in mind, when he found himself and family alone in the world, with its utter wreck and ruin around, as the new settler surrounded with so many drawbacks as a bush property presents. And now that the flood had disarranged and undone all the work of months, it did indeed seem a dreary task to commence again, and try to reduce to order and cultivation that mass of wilderness confusion. But our friends were clever and astute young bushmen, and had learned from experience that they possessed what is far better than many hands to accomplish much work—namely, good heads to avoid it, when that can be done by proper management.

In returning to the wharri, after the day's work, we took separate roads in order to look after the cattle, which were always allowed to roam in search of food; and when we rejoined each other, it turned out that none of us had seen them, and the fact

became evident that they must have strayed. "Confound it," said one of our friends, "that brute Merryman has been down here and enticed them off again."

Now, Merryman was a bull who had long asserted his independence, and had roamed at large in the Bush unowned; consistently with his name he played his jokes freely, but in too practical a way, for he strove to contaminate the minds of other cattle, and lead them astray. We at once went out in pursuit, but the night was too much advanced to go far, and after two or three hours' fruitless search we were obliged to give it up, not having found even a foot-track.

Next morning we were astir by day-break, and all started off in a party to search for the missing cattle, ten in number. The unbounded liberty and independence which a lack of fences gives to cattle (for it generally takes a "new chum" several years before he can fence in his land) is often the cause of a sedition among them. The reason of the present one, our friends felt certain, was attributable to Merryman, who being of vulgar origin and low degree, possessed of a reckless roving disposition, and accustomed to go astray from his youth upwards, had doubtless been promulgating his foul sentiments and vicious doctrines, enforcing them with his immense horns, and had led them forth to seek a fairer pasturage in some other

locality. We tracked them to the river (which was still high, and rendered the process of wading through very difficult), and then across a plain on the opposite side, for several miles. But here the Bush commenced again, and we lost all trace of them. Thinking perhaps they might have ascended the ranges, we went up for about a mile, until we came to an opening which commanded a good view of the valley, and there, sure enough, about six miles up the river, were the missing cattle. With hope invigorated, we immediately descended, and beat our way through the dense bush, until we neared their retreat; but as ill luck would have it, the old brute Merryman had evidently been spending his leisure time in teaching the young idea tactics, for they had chosen a place the very best in the world to evade pursuit or capture, it being an island, to the right of which ran the Takaka, and on the left a deep stream, dividing the island from the bush. We waded waist-deep up to the island, and sagaciously remarking "Wo, Rodney! Wo, Blackboy!" &c., succeeded in landing without the cattle attempting to leave. What could be more fortunate? But our luck was short-lived; for Merryman, with a keenness worthy of his wandering experience, sounded a retreat, and leading the van plunged into the stream, and thence into the bush, followed by all the others. We were soon after them,

rushing into the bush, despite an army of Bush-Lawyers—an ingenious bramble, with rows of thorns arranged in a most hurtful way on the back of the leaves—which stared us in the face like writs of ejectment; but, alas! the cattle had hidden themselves in the intricacies of that maze, and our work for some hours was like searching for needles in pottles of hay. At last one of the party secured four, another got old Merryman alone on the island, and the others were still on the search. But how to keep these separate lots secure until all should be got together, was a problem we could not solve; one brute would make a desperate plunge into the stream, and while trying to stop it, the other three would rush off in an opposite direction. Everybody has seen Box and Cox performed—how Box comes in just as Cox goes out, and neither of them know how they avoid each other so well; the farce in performance that day was a new edition of Box and Cox, the principal characters by the brute creation. After a rehearsal for eight hours the curtain of night fell upon the scene, and we stood together without having secured one between us. That night we camped out, and slept upon our children-in-the-wood beds, composed of leaves, as soundly as if we had been surrounded with all the luxuries of life. It would be tedious to tell how we resumed our search at daybreak, and wandered over

miles of country, sometimes seeing the wretched animals rushing from us, as the swine must have rushed when possessed, or dodging us behind the trees with all the good-humoured impudence of children playing at Bo-peep. Towards evening, however, we had managed to drive the ten prodigals on to the open plain, and cut off all communication with Merryman, by leaving him alone in the bush. That night we arrived at the wharri, foot-sore and weary, but with the gratification of having all the cattle secure in the stockyard.

EXPLORING.

THE rivers had all gone down to their usual level, the weather promised to remain settled, and our friends were able to apply themselves again to the ordinary routine of Bush-life. We therefore, although reluctantly, left them on the day following the cattle adventure, to continue our tour. We now proceeded down the Takaka Valley, through mossy groves and alcoves of bush, crossing on foot the rapid Waikaro River, which rushes down from the mountains with inconceivable force, until we arrived at a place called Waitapu, a large open plain or flat valley. About one-half of this plain is densely timbered, the remaining portion being clear, but agreeably diversified with clumps and belts of bush, which give it a very cultivated and park-like appearance. Beside some of these clumps, sheltered from the wind, are the rude log huts of the settlers, chosen on sites in every respect well-suited for agricultural purposes. The

soil of the plain is of various character, a considerable portion consisting of light dry vegetable soil, adapted for paddocks, and about an equal quantity of dark-coloured flax land, suitable for potatoes or wheat; the remainder is rich swampy land, for the most part capable of drainage. The plain is surrounded by rugged ridges covered with pine and other timber, and is watered by the broad Takaka, which is excellent water for drinking purposes. At present there are comparatively few settlers in this part, but it will rise in importance as the population in the province increases. A Maori pah is situated at the extremity of the plain bordering on the sea beach, inhabited by about fifty natives. One old man, to whom we were introduced by some friends we met at the port, was a deeply-tattooed and rather hideous-looking native. He was pointed out as a curiosity, from the fact that by his own confession he had been, in his earlier days, a thorough-going cannibal, who had "fared sumptuously" on I know not how many of his fellow-mortals. Cannibalism has long since been quite extinct, but there seems to be a latent appetite in some of the older members of the native community to have the savoury dish their soul loveth, once more before they die. If a Maori is asked if he "would like a whitey-man for ki-ki (food)," he will always answer, "Whitey-man no good ki-ki—too much the salt;"—

it being generally believed among them that the immense quantity of salt consumed by the Europeans permeates their whole system. There is another Maori pah at Motupipi, not far from Waitapu, a favourite resort of the natives in fishing seasons. It is famous for its pipies, or cockles, as its name implies,* a food of which the Maories are so remarkably fond, that even when they are on their journeys, travelling on foot over steep mountain tracks, they fatigue themselves by carrying huge baskets filled with them to eat as a delicacy upon the road. Motupipi is also famous for its coal mines at Rangihaeta Point, which were commenced to be worked, but have since been abandoned in consequence of the difficulty of putting the coals on board ship, and the large quantity of water in the mines.

Our point of destination for that night lay some distance farther on, and we therefore had not time to examine very minutely many of the beauties and curiosities of these places. Waitapu and Motupipi present capital sites, however, for the formation of towns. There is plenty of good available land in the Takaka and surrounding country, which only requires enterprising settlers to open up; there is a small harbour, capable of berthing all the vessels that would be required there for trading purposes; and there are

* *Motu*, many; *pipi*, cockles.

many other natural advantages, which might easily be developed and made of service to the settlers. Leaving Motupipi, we made our way to the residence of one Mr. Bell, who lived in a retired, out-of-the-way, improbable kind of place—a very Crusoe in his loneliness for many years, until an event happened which changed the whole aspect of his affairs. One day, upon going over his lands with a tin dish, he washed some of the soil and discovered several specks of gold; the same experiment tried in different spots was attended with the same success. Immediately the fact became known a tide of diggers set in—a "rush" was made to the place—and the once silent wilderness was, when we arrived there, echoing with the rattle of stones in the "long-toms," the strokes of the pick, and the merry voices of successful diggers.

With some difficulty we found our way to the curious valley where his property is situate, being guided only by a narrow foot-track, about two feet wide, over barren hills and through flax swamps. It was quite dark when we arrived at the house. The dogs gave notice of the approach of strangers, and we were challenged with a "Holloa, there!" Introductions are not formal or stately, as a rule, anywhere in New Zealand; and, in outlandish places, any icebergs of refinement in such matters are thawed down immediately a strange face appears. Only one of our

party knew Mr. Bell personally, but that was quite a sufficient warranty for introducing half-a-dozen friends, all of whom were shaken cordially by the hand and made on terms of intimacy in half-an-hour.

Genuine hospitality, given with a hearty welcome, produces friendly feeling in very quick time; and as we sat before the huge log-fire that evening, enjoying a cup of tea and a pipe in the happy Crusoe-family circle, all feeling at home and at ease, we drew a few contrasts between manners and customs in England and those in the colonies; and had the matter been put to the vote, an unqualified expression in favour of the latter would have been carried unanimously. We learned from Mr. Bell that there were about a hundred diggers working in a gully about a mile from his house, and that the average wages being made was from ten shillings to fifteen shillings per day. It had produced a complete change in the ordinary monotonous life of that place. Formerly, for months they did not see a strange face, nor did any event transpire worthy of an entry in a diary; now, people were continually coming and going, and hopes were entertained that the yield of gold would ultimately be sufficient to warrant a much larger influx of diggers.

Mr. Bell kindly promised to escort us to *his* diggings on the morrow, and show us all the lions of the neigh-

bourhood. And now came a question of difficulty :— "Where were we to sleep for the night?" We could not well camp out of doors, as there had been showers during the evening, which were likely to continue at intervals through the night, and there was no room in our host's wharri. An expedient was soon found. There was a single man living in a wharri not far off, and we were assured that all of us could find plenty of room, and be welcome to spread our blankets and get a shake-down there for the night. Thither we repaired, and found that a party, who had arrived on the diggings the day before, had claimed his hospitality and taken possession until their tents were pitched. "However," said the proprietor of the wharri, "if you don't mind being a little crowded, and will take things as they come, I dare say we can manage;" and, without any further ado, we lay down our knapsacks, took our seats on the floor, and made ourselves at home. Our host felt not a little honoured at the number of his guests, and was as active as a Vauxhall waiter in trying to make us comfortable. The fire was replenished with logs of wood, the tea-kettle was put on, and tin pannikins of the beverage were handed round for refreshment—a bag of sugar being placed in the middle for each to "make his tea as he liked it." The guests sat in a circle round the fire, and a choice collection of dogs

of divers breeds, from the shepherd to the knife-grinder, occupied the centre.

Several hours slipped rapidly away in animated conversation; every mosquito in the place was destroyed in the dense clouds of smoke which ascended incessantly from the queerest assortment of dirty little pipes ever exhibited at any similar *soirée;* and when the hour of midnight advanced, a general untying of knapsacks commenced, and blankets were spread. The wharri was made of branches of the manuka tree, thatched with ranpo grass, in size about fifteen feet by ten; and into this space were crowded no fewer than fourteen souls, or rather bodies, which take up more room. There certainly was some little difficulty to find space for sleeping, but, with careful management on mathematical principles, this was overcome. After strewing the floor with sacks, fern, and any substance tending towards softness, each rolled himself up in a blanket and took his place; so each "fell in" in turn, four deep in the room, with every man's feet to feet. The boards were about as hard to lie on as boards usually are; nevertheless we slept well, and felt not a little satisfaction that we were so safely housed, as several heavy showers fell during the night.

Next morning we started with our friend, Mr. Bell, to look round the country, and see the sights. The

first place to which he took us was the Waikaromumu (boiling springs), a most extraordinary and interesting phenomenon. Knowing the country well, he brought us by a way in which the best effect was produced. We were walking along, partly in bush and partly in open and stony land, when suddenly a wide river rolled in front of us, and we were standing at what seemed its source. There it came, rushing up from a mighty fathomless well immediately before us, the whole surface bubbling as if it were boiling, and away it fled, a broad and beautiful river. Owing to the immense depth of the pit or well from which it issued, the mass of water was a deep blue, but appeared, of course, colourless when in the river, beautifully bright and clear, and very good for drinking. We amused ourselves in cutting down a number of flax bushes, tearing them into lengths and tying them together, until we had a string of about two hundred feet in length, more or less, to which we attached a large stone, and threw it in, to try and ascertain if the well could be fathomed, but in this we were signally unsuccessful. The immense rush of water drifted the stone into some crevice in the side of the pit, from which we had difficulty to extricate it, without breaking our string; at length we got it free, and lowered it to the length of the rope, but failed in touching the bottom. This strange phenomenon may be attri-

butable to the same cause as the bottomless pits on the Pikikerunga range, namely, the action of water dissolving the limestone and forming caverns, pits, and subterranean passages in its way. A passage may thus have been made through the limestone on the mountain ranges, and have formed a subterranean river, the mouth of which is the singular Waikaromumu. There are one or two places closely adjacent, where the water comes bubbling up through the ground, and forms wide and rapid streams. There are some curious and pretty stones and rubies occasionally found about these springs.

We next went over Mr. Bell's property, inspected the different spots where gold had been obtained, and then took a glance at the diggers on the new field. All the men were in good spirits, and doing well; the gully they were in was one of extreme beauty, with abrupt precipitous ranges around, upon which the graceful nikau and fern palm abounded. We were very much interested with a large Maori party, who had turned the course of the river, and were working with some considerable success on one of the largest claims. There were about thirty men and women in the gang, and for every one actually engaged in work, two were looking on, giving directions, and occasionally lending a helping hand. Those at work were digging with their hard bare feet upon the

spades, chuckling at every thrust, as if they were bent upon turning up a monster nugget. A group of women were round a pool, washing the "tailings" in tin dishes, and luxuriating in their pipes at the same time, while several half-naked little urchins were making themselves generally useful in multifarious odd jobs. Native ingenuity is as valuable upon the gold-fields as European knowledge, and with a geological instinct they pitch upon some of the best spots, and manage the working of their claims in a very masterly way.

We parted from our hospitable friend, Mr. Bell, in the afternoon, and, shouldering our blankets and knapsacks, walked to the sea-beach, which is the main road to the Para-para, our next place of destination. The beach is wide and level, with fine close sand, upon which we walked for about twelve miles, without shoes and stockings, enjoying the luxury —esteemed alike pleasurable in childhood as in more advanced age—of paddling at the edge of the tide as it rolls in on the sands. The walk to the Para-para is very beautiful; high bluffs on one hand, and the broad expanse of Massacre Bay on the other, with its pretty white-sailed schooners glistening in the sun as they danced upon the waves. We arrived at the Para-para towards dark, and were met by an unexpected difficulty in getting to the place where we

intended to camp for the night. The bluffs suddenly terminated, and a large mud-flat and open plain, through which the Para-para river runs in numerous branches into the sea, was before us. When it is low tide these river branches are seen clearly, and there are falls, over which they may be crossed without much danger or difficulty.

It was, unfortunately, neither high nor low water when we arrived at the plain; the tide was ebbing, and being strangers to the place we did not know how much it had to recede before it would be safe to venture across. All we saw was one vast sheet of water; it did not appear unsafe, but we knew that the river-beds which were hidden were deep, and sometimes dangerous even at low tide. Clouds were gathering around us, and a dark wet night was threatened; our difficulty therefore resolved itself into this form—whether it was better to camp out on the sands without food or fire (for there was no brushwood near), or whether we should run the risk of crossing in order to get to some house? We drew lots—the one to whom the lot fell was to determine the question. It came to one of the most harum-scarum of the party, who settled the point at issue by saying, "Here's in for it," and was soon waist-deep in the water. We all followed, but soon had to return; the force of the water was sufficient to take us off

our legs, and we were fast getting out of depth. We attempted to ford at another spot more inland, and here we made better progress. We proceeded for some little distance, when our leader, who was only a step or two in advance, gave a cry of alarm, and immediately sunk under the water. One of our party at once cried out, "A shark! a shark!" which caused a still greater consternation among us, knowing how they infest the sea in Massacre Bay; but our friend rose up the next moment, being a good swimmer, and explained the cause of his disappearance; he had fallen into a branch of the river, which being covered by the tide had not been observed. We were a long time in finding a suitable place to cross it; at length we succeeded, and went on again a short distance, when another equally sudden disappearance under water was made, and then we found our pluck fast failing. One or two could not swim, and if they should fall in the results might be serious. We came to a halt, and discussed with our drenched friends what was best to be done. Being about half-way across, the difficulties in returning might be quite as great as those in going forward; none felt disposed to go back, and none had courage to progress. In this emergency no choice was left but to stay where we were; and there we remained, more than knee-deep in water, for the space of an

hour, by which time the tide had sufficiently receded to enable us to see and guard against the branches of the river. Fairly across, we looked out for the first place of refuge for the night, and were fortunate in descrying a Maori wharri not five hundred yards distant. Thither we repaired, dried our clothes, had some supper, and in company with four natives, two pigs, and some tame ka-kas, spent as agreeable a night as could be expected under the circumstances.

Next day we arrived in the town of Collingwood, the chief port of the Massacre Bay diggings, and the Aorere of former days. We merely remained long enough in the town to see the wonderful alterations that had been made in the course of a year or two. The little peaceful village of Aorere, where I stayed on my first visit to the gold-fields, was so altered that scarcely anything remained to remind me of the place. Stores and hotels lined the streets, bullock-drays were on the beach, ready to receive the cargoes discharging from several vessels in the port, and the whole aspect of affairs was changed. Passing Collingwood, we proceeded by the main road towards the diggings for about four miles, and then, according to directions we had received, struck off to the left in search of the Mammoth Caverns, which have been discovered since the diggings "broke out," and have been rendered memorable by several curious events.

We had not long to search; descending a small ravine beside an immense rimu tree, we followed on till we came to the mouth of the caverns. Here we lighted the candles with which we had provided ourselves, tied them to long sticks so as to illumine the roof, and entered. At first the darkness was impenetrable, the candles seemed to refuse their light, and the darkness to grow blacker still, not liking to be disturbed where it had reigned so many years; large drops of water spattered down to the imminent danger of extinguishing our lights, and huge boulder stones seemed to have rolled themselves into the most awkward places possible, in order to throw any one down who dared to force an entry. But use is second nature, and in a few minutes our eyes began to grow accustomed to the darkness, the lights shone better, and the cave was more water-tight the farther we advanced. In front of us there stood a majestic archway, like the ruins of some venerable cathedral, with carved roof and trellised galleries. Above our defenceless heads were huge slabs of stone, poised with so nice a balance that it seemed as if the slightest movement would have sent the ponderous mass upon us; at our feet ran a stream which seemed afraid to hear its own voice in so gloomy an abode—and beyond, thick darkness that mighᵗ be felt. We were surprised to see on the roof what looked like stars seen

through small holes bored from the top, but which we found to be glow-worms of a peculiar kind, that shed a pale bluish light, and seemed the spirits of the cave. After travelling for about half a mile, sometimes in a magnificent chamber fifty or sixty feet high, and then creeping along on all-fours through narrow passages till we entered some other vast architectural labyrinth, we came to a pond of water which was impassable—beyond it we could still see passages leading nobody knew where; but are supposed to continue for some miles, until they reach the Slate River, where other caverns have been discovered.

One of the events that rendered these caves remarkable was the discovery, by a party of diggers, of a skeleton of the gigantic bird known in the traditions of the Maories as the frightful Moa, and to science as the genera of Dinornis, Notornis and Palaptorix. Some time afterwards the caves were visited by Dr. Hochstetter, the geologist, of the Novara Expedition. He thus describes the result of his visit:*—

"When, in 1857, I saw in the British Museum the skeletons of Dinornis Elephantopus, and Dinornis

* Lecture delivered by Dr. Ferdinand Hochstetter, in Nelson, September 29th, 1859.

Robustus, I little thought that I should so soon be in possession of the same treasures.

"Before my arrival in Collingwood I had heard of the late discovery of Moa bones in those caves, and I was anxious to procure those specimens which I had had so little success in obtaining in the Northern Island. In the first cave which I entered (my friend Haast has since given it my name), after a short search I dug out some fragments of bones from the loam on the bottom of the cave. I was convinced that the treasures had not all been carried away, as from the caves in the Northern Island; and on the same day the finding of a Moa skull, so far as I know the most perfect yet found in New Zealand, was the reward of further researches.

"Being obliged myself to leave for the Pakawau coal-fields, my friend Haast remained behind, in company with the young surveyor, Mr. Maling, to make more extensive researches. The bottom of a second cave, the Stafford's Cave, was turned up, and the bottom of a third one, the 'Moa Cave.' The excitement of the Moa diggers was great, and increased; for the deeper they went below the stalagmite crusts covering the floor, the larger were the bones they found, and whole legs, from the hip-bone to the claws of the toes, were laid open. They dug and washed three days and three nights, and on the

fourth day they returned in triumph to Collingwood, followed by two pack-bullocks, loaded with Moa bones. I must confess that not only was it a cause of great excitement to the people of Collingwood, but also to myself, as the gigantic bones were laid before our view. A Maori bringing me two living Kiwis, from Rocky River, gave us an opportunity to compare the remains of the extinct species of the family with the living *Apteryx*. It gives me much pleasure to acknowledge the zeal and exertions of my friend, M. Haast, in adding such valuable specimens to the collections of the Novara Expedition. The observations of M. Haast, made during this search, throw a new light upon this great family of extinct birds.* He found that, according to the depth, so was the size of the remains; thus proving that the greater the antiquity the larger the species. The bones of *dinornis crassus* and *ingens* (a bird standing the height of nine feet) were always found at a lower level than the bones of *dinornis diniformis* (Owen) of only four feet high.

"I have the pleasure of showing you here a leg of *dinornis crassus*:—

	Long.		Circumference of the Shaft.
Tarsus.....	9½ in.	.....	6 ft. 9 in.
Tibia	22 „	.....	6 „ 6 „
Femur	13 „	.....	8 „ 0 „
Spread of the claws.	15 „		

* See Appendix D.

"These gigantic birds belong to an era prior to the human race—to a post-tertiary period; and it is a remarkably incomprehensible fact of the creation, that whilst in the very same period, in the old world, elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotami; in South America, gigantic sloths and armadillos; in Australia, gigantic kangaroos, wombats, and dasyures were living, the colossal forms of animal life were represented in New Zealand by gigantic birds, who marked the shores then untrod by the foot of any quadruped."

We could not leave the neighbourhood without taking a glance at the new country opened up by the gold-diggers, who had penetrated into parts never before visited by human beings, and who were finding the precious metal, some on the heights of the Rocky Mountains and Quartz Ranges, and some in the unexplored regions of the wild bush. We left the caves, and trudged forward towards the Slate and Buller River diggings. Our way lay through the Bush, which was approached on the main road by an extraordinary natural archway, formed by two immense rocks resting one against the other. On the top of these rocks large totara and pine trees waved their graceful branches; while fern trees, with their fan-spread leaves, wafted down the balmy fragrance of climbing rata flowers, which festooned the rocky

slopes, and intertwined among the evergreens. It was an archway that kings might have envied for their palaces, but which Nature had given to "make gay the solitary place." New Zealand abounds with these grand extravagances. At night, we reached a place of great renown among the diggers—convivially called Brandy Point. Immediately below this point a frightful descent, not very far out of a perpendicular, leads down to the Slate River diggings. There are other descents to the place equally steep, and curiously christened,—Jacob's Ladder, Precipice Walk, and Break-neck Steps. We made the descent from Brandy Point,—jumping from stump to stump, sliding rapidly until brought in sudden contact with a tree, and occasionally shortening the journey by missing our footing, and making a premature plunge head-foremost. We found a good camping-place, where a tent had recently stood, with staves and ridge-poles ready set for any new comers; we stretched a pair of blankets over these, and soon had a house over our heads, pleasantly situate beside the rushing river, with the maitai and kauri trees around, and the bacchanalian head of Brandy Point above.

We awoke early next morning, not very much refreshed. The night had been bitterly cold, our clothing was limited, a heavy dew had fallen, and

completely saturated our blankets, and the concert of the wind whistling through the trees, and the waters rushing over the falls, had not facilitated sleep. But any little inconveniences of this kind are overlooked in rough travelling, and a bad night's rest is atoned for by a good day's exploration.

The Upper Slate River is broad and swift, running between two high rocky embankments. The diggings were in the river bed, and the course of the river had to be turned to get at them. There were a few bars here and there which the water did not touch, and those considered themselves lucky who managed to get claims on them.

Going up the Slate and Buller Rivers is no easy matter. We had to mount the craggy rocks where little jutting pieces formed footsteps, with nothing to hold on to, and the pleasing prospect of finding ourselves falling headlong into the river if we failed to make a firm, even tread. There is something exceedingly enchanting in danger—a fascination hovers over every step, when destruction lurks beneath; and a charming terror hangs about the scenery where death sits enthroned, and chuckles at the traps laid to snare travellers to himself. Nature and death seem to have a tacit understanding with each other; she seems bribed never to reveal his secrets, and smiles just the same when covering destruction from

the gaze of the unwary as when she leads the weary pilgrim to a peaceful retreat.

At each bend of the river the diggers were at work; and as they descried us approaching on the rocks, a simultaneous cry of "Joe! Joe!" was raised. This is a popular cry on the New Zealand diggings, and is used to hail any "new chums" who may appear. It had its origin at the Australian diggings, where licenses were granted to all who held claims, and those who worked without were liable to be apprehended and punished. When the police came upon the ground, therefore, to inspect licenses, the cry of "Joe!" was raised, and whenever the password was given, a thousand voices echoed the cry, until it passed over the fields, when those who had not licenses made their escape as quickly as possible.

We went to the extremity of the scene of operations, and inspected all the works. It was a mystery to us, who had had such difficulty to make our way up the river without a single encumbrance (for we had left our packages with some diggers at Brandy Point), to conceive how those men could possibly have brought tools, provisions, tents, and utensils along that dangerous and almost impassable track.*

The time we had allotted for our journey we had already exceeded, and we found that, however reluc-

* See Appendix A.

tantly, it was absolutely necessary we should return at once.

We tramped all the way back to Waitapu, determining to take a sailing vessel thence home to Nelson. But we reckoned without our host. When we got there we found that the "Necromancer," the schooner in which we intended to travel, had met with a disaster at sea, and had put in somewhere for repairs. A hard alternative remained. We must either walk back to Collingwood—about twenty miles—and wait, we knew not how long, the chance of a steamer, or return the way we had come, over those awful Pikikerunga ranges. We determined on the latter course, as we could get a vessel from Motueka, about thirty miles from Nelson.

In the Takaka Valley we met a party of Maories; one was mounted on a miserably lean horse; the others were giving him travelling directions. We accosted the group, and learned that the mounted Maori was going overland to Nelson, and the others were describing the way, as he was a stranger. We told them we were bound for the same place, and would show him the way as far as Motueka. The Maori had no food (and we had but little with us), nor had he money to purchase any with. As we were all rather exhausted with our long journeyings, we made terms with him to this effect: that if he would get off

his horse and walk the distance with us, and allow us to lash our knapsacks over his beast's back, we, in return for the assistance rendered, would provide him with refreshment at the houses of accommodation, and guarantee him a good supper and night's shelter at the house of our two young friends in the valley, with whom we had stayed during the wet weather. To this he gladly consented; but declined to take our swags on the horse till the next morning, in order that it might be quite fresh for the mountain journey.

We well performed our part of the contract; introduced him to our friends (who were surprised to see us back again, and who congratulated us upon our manœuvre in chartering the Maori), and gave him a first-rate supper of kaka and potatoes; the former he cooked for himself in the most novel manner, over a few sticks of wood. Soon after, he rolled himself up in a corner for the night, promising to rouse us at four in the morning.

At four in the morning we were sound asleep, and no Maori had made his appearance; at five we were all astir, and blank was our astonishment to find that our Maori had decamped. We sought him, but found him not. We were not long before we were in his track, but he had stolen a march upon us, and was far away. He had obtained all the information he required; had fared sumptuously, and gone on his

way, rejoicing in his treacherous heart at our discomfiture. We did not overtake him; nevertheless, he rendered us a service without assisting us in carrying our burdens, for we were so hot in pursuit, in order to play some practical joke upon him in retaliation, that the journey we should otherwise have dragged slowly over, was accomplished briskly and merrily in chase of the Maori.

We were just in the nick of time for a boat at Motueka, and returned to Nelson thoroughly joded, but heartily delighted with our pedestrian tour.

TARANAKI.

SURROUNDED as I was in Nelson with the Taranaki refugees, it was impossible not to have my sympathies largely called forth with regard to their sorely trying misfortunes. Every person had his or her tale to tell, all more or less harrowing. My next-door neighbours were an old man and woman, who had lost their son, a fine, manly young fellow, recently married. He was shot and tomahawked by the natives, when outside the trenches, seeking to render relief to the passengers in a vessel which was wrecked near the town of Taranaki. A few doors off was a widow lady, with four daughters; her husband had been murdered in endeavouring to reclaim some of the property he had been obliged to leave in his house when the natives first drove them from their homes. All around were families who, upon the alarm of the natives rising to invade the town, had escaped from their dwellings in the outlying district, and gone to the garrison for

protection, taking with them only such few articles of clothing as they could carry in their hands.

Fathers had tales to tell of farms destroyed, houses burned, and cattle stolen, for which years of arduous toil had been expended, in order to establish their children comfortably, and where they might spend in peace the remainder of their days. Mothers had griefs to detail of household comforts, which had been gained little by little through years of frugality, all left to be plundered by the ruthless enemy. Wives who had husbands in active service at the war were full of care and anxiety, fearing that the next news might tell of an engagement in which their last earthly support and comfort was destroyed. Parents were in hourly suspense for their sons, who were exposed to dangers of many kinds; and every one had friends or relatives for whom they were distressed and anxious.

A hard sight, too, was it to see the number of people in mourning for those who had already lost their lives in the different encounters with the natives which had taken place. There were Rachels "weeping for their children, and would not be comforted because they were not;" and Davids mourning, "O Absalom, my son! my son!"

When the steamers from the seat of war were signalled in Blind Bay, it was a melancholy sight to

watch the distressed countenances of those whose interests were so intimately connected with any intelligence that might be brought; numbers from the outlying districts of Nelson would hasten down to the town, and when the steamer came slowly into the harbour, hundreds of beating and almost bursting hearts were waiting to be told the news. Perhaps the intelligence would be hurriedly given, "Another engagement; four Europeans killed, six wounded;" and that must have been a hard-hearted man or woman who could look on unmoved, as the tears started simultaneously to the eyes of those unhappy people, and they questioned among themselves, "Is my son, or is my husband, one?" or breathed a prayer, "God grant my George is not among the number!"

The newspapers were every week full of war news, and the untiring topic of conversation was Taranaki. Knowing, as I did, so many of the refugees, and their unfortunate histories, I shared in the curiosity which would naturally be felt under these circumstances to visit the place where such stirring events had happened, and hear the opinions of settlers and soldiers there as to the policy and conduct of the war. I started, therefore, one day in November, 1860, by the mail steamer, "Prince Alfred," for Taranaki.

We anchored in the roadsteads late on a dark night, when no view could be obtained; and as I had

been told by my Taranaki friends that, to see Mount Egmont and the surrounding scenery in its full beauty it must be viewed at sunrise, I made a compact with my eyes not to strain them in uselessly endeavouring to get a glimpse that night, but to wait patiently until morning.

I was amply rewarded for my self-denial. The glorious sight that burst upon my vision, when I went on deck the next morning, I shall never forget! There lay stretched before me the "Garden of New Zealand," the combination of all that is lovely and majestic in Nature; there rose Mount Egmont, "the snow-crested Apollo of mountains," eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, glistening in the rays of the rising sun. On the edge of the beach was the town, with its neat and homely houses, stores, churches, and chapels; along the coast lay the principal agricultural and pastoral lands of the province; and, far away, stretched a densely-wooded semi-circle of hills, terminating in the Sugar-loaf Rocks, which stood out alone in the sea.

All looked calm and peaceful; the birds were making the bush ring with their glad songs; the bright sunlight was dancing upon the little granite church on the hill, and other places of worship and public buildings; and the rustic scene of simple village life was enhanced in beauty by the majestic

Mount Egmont, wearing its crown of eternal snow, and standing isolated in its elevation, towering alone to heaven. Who would have thought, to look upon that quiet, rural scene, with God's sunshine smiling down upon it, and the face of nature lighted up with a smile in return, that the horrors of war had made it a desolation; that those churches and chapels were the refuges of homeless settlers; that every house was filled with soldiery; and that, even then, the sentinels were upon the watch, guarding it from the approach of enemies? Who would have thought, as they gazed upon the town still slumbering in the early morning, that restless nights had been passed by hundreds of men with aching hearts, separated from homes, wives, and families, with earthly prospects blighted and all their brightest hopes faded; that many a house there was filled with mourners, who had lost friends or relatives either by the murderous hands of the natives, or in the terrible heat and conflict of battle? Taranaki, the garden of New Zealand, reminded me that morning of Eden when man had sinned, and the curse had fallen upon it.

At eight o'clock the passengers were allowed to go ashore. I hailed a boat, and, in company with several friends, went to see and hear all that was to be seen and heard in Taranaki in one day, the time allotted to us for our visit.

The great drawback to Taranaki is the absence of any harbour, the only shipping place being an open and not over good roadstead. We were anchored about a mile-and-a-half off the beach, and the wind, which had been blowing for two days previously, had caused the sea to run so high that our short journey occupied a full hour to accomplish. At a distance of about two hundred yards from the beach are buoys with ropes attached; and the boatmen, as they come up to them, run these ropes through rings at the head and stern of their boats to pull them to shore. This is not attended with danger, but often with great inconvenience, as it proved in our case. The waves break upon the shore with great force, and the difficulty in landing is to be able, when a wave is coming up, to have all hands to the rope and pull the boat along with the wave, otherwise it will break over the boat, and the consequence is a thorough wet jacket and skin. No sooner is a wave safely pulled over and an impetus given to the boat than another is ready to swamp it, unless at the exact nick of time, and with a hearty long and strong pull together, all hands are ready at their post. Not being used to the service, we had escaped one wave and were congratulating ourselves with some complacency just at the very moment when we should have been ready for the next pull, and to our great discomfiture

the wave broke in the boat and we found ourselves minus our equilibrium, and provided with a copious shower-bath gratis. Fortunately we were not far from the land, and a good muster of strong hardy boatmen were after us, almost as soon as the next wave came up, and on their backs we were conveyed safely to the beach.

No sooner were we ashore than a crowd had assembled, for the vessel in which we came had brought the mail from Nelson, and almost every person had relatives or friends there from whom they were anxious to hear. Nor were we long in hearing Taranaki news; the whole place was in an excitement about an engagement which had only very recently taken place—the famous battle of Mahoetahi.* Every person had a different version to give, none of which agreed with others, and the last account always the most exaggerated. Some said sixty natives had been killed, others made the number a hundred-and-sixty; while some were giving all the credit of the victory to the militia, and others to the volunteers.

The first object of interest on landing is the beach itself. It is formed, for many miles, of the finest iron-sand, only requiring skill and capital to convert it into good merchantable iron. It "consists almost wholly of crystals of the magnetic oxide of

* See Appendix B.

iron. These crystals are remarkably uniform in size, but their angles and edges are much worn, as though by attrition. They are not contaminated by any sulphuret of iron, but are mixed with a small quantity of a white mineral. Acids resolve this black iron-sand into the following constituents:—Magnetic oxide of iron, 93·95 per cent.; white mineral, 5·52; trace of lime and loss, 0·52."* The sand has been smelted on the spot and converted into bar iron of good quality. A Company has been formed to turn this substance to commercial account, and there can be no doubt it will prove a great source of wealth to the colony.†

As we walked through the town, its warlike appearance, which had not been seen from the vessel, became manifest. Every other person we met was a soldier; soldiers were standing in groups at the corners of the streets, or in heated and excited manner were talking at every public-house door of the recent victory. Sentinels were parading the streets, and at intervals throughout the whole town sentry boxes were stationed, made of branches of the manuka tree. There were trenches and fortifications all round the town, which seemed to me, unused to the details of war, to be more for show than practical

* From Report on the Iron-Sand from New Plymouth, by J. H. Gladstone, Ph.D., F.R.S. † See Appendix C.

use. From the barracks, which stand in a very commanding position on a hill, cannons were pointed down the streets; and from the church and other prominent places the same formidable fear-inspirers were staring us in the face. The shops in the town were open; in many of them men in uniform were serving, and notices were exhibited in several windows to the effect that "the premises would be closed at twelve o'clock during parade."

It was the first time any of us had been in the immediate vicinity of war, or witnessed any of its sad realities. It was lamentable to walk through that once flourishing and prosperous town, and see what ravages had been made. Business was at an end, except for articles of daily consumption; the streets were desolate—not a woman or child was to be seen, none but the soldiery, who were all in bustle and confusion. In many of the streets camps were pitched, and every available piece of land was used for building temporary habitations to shelter the number of people who overcrowded the town.

We went on the Barrack Hill, and there a fine view was obtained. An old Taranaki settler accompanied us, and pointed out all the objects of interest. In a moment we had explained some of the mystery which had overhung the proceedings of the past few months in the prosecution of the war. People, who had not

been to Taranaki, wondered why on earth Colonel Gold and General Pratt did not follow the natives into the Bush, instead of perpetually dilly-dallying until they came out into the open. A glance at the country spoke volumes. Around the town of New Plymouth were the trenches; immediately outside, open agricultural and pastoral lands, with little suburban hamlets; and beyond that the dense bush, in which ten thousand natives might be secreted, and those gazing upon the spot a mile distant be none the wiser.

Our Taranaki friend pointed out the beautiful district of Omata, where not long since the flourishing little village of the same name stood, but which has since been totally destroyed by the enemy; the Waitara, the scene of so many disasters; the well-garrisoned Bell Block stockade, and all the other localities which have been rendered notable by reason of the events which have happened during the present war; and as he recalled the different districts, the incidents associated with them came afresh before his mind's eye, and he gave us many harrowing details of the perils in which he and his fellow-settlers had been placed. A big tear stood in his eye as he pointed out a charred and ruined heap, which was all that remained of a home for which he had anxiously and perseveringly toiled through long and weary years.

At twelve o'clock we perceived a procession making

its way up the Barrack Hill to the terrace where we were standing. It was General Pratt and his suite, who were going the rounds of the trenches, and were inspecting the troops, all of whom had been summoned to attend parade that day. I was very anxious to see him,—the man upon whom so much depended, of whom so much had been written and spoken, and who was looked upon by many as the man who could save Taranaki, and by others as the man who would signally fail in his measures, and multiply troubles upon the doomed province. I was very much disappointed in his appearance. He looked every inch a General, but one whose day had gone by; his hair was white, head bent, and face furrowed with the marks of time. This did not look to me to be the man who would "put an end to the war within two months;" however dashing and determined a man he might have been in younger days, I thought that Major Nelson, who was walking by his side, a resolute, brave, and active soldier—who with little pretension has done much—was a far more likely man to bring the war to a close, than the aged General.

We then went over the barracks, found some friends in the officers' rooms, and were shown some of the trophies of the war. Rifles bent and broken, swords shattered, guns and weapons captured from the natives, and the Maori flag which was taken at the memorable

battle of Waireka. The devices on the flag were "M. N." (Maori nation), Mount Egmont (Taranaki), the Sugar-loaf Rock, and figures of the sun and a heart on a red ground. The explanation given by the natives of the meaning of these symbols is, that their land and the land of their ancestors extends from Taranaki to the Sugar-loaf Rock, that the eye of God is fixed upon it, and it is determined in the heart of the Maori nation to possess it.

We went also to the hospital, where one or two wounded natives and more Europeans were lying, and two of our brave countrymen lay dead, killed in the recent engagement.

As I have stated, the steamer in which we travelled only allowed us one day at Taranaki, and we were not sorry our stay could not be prolonged. The place was gloomy; true, the military were in high spirits enough, the martial sounds of drums and bugles were heard in every direction, soldiers were parading, and all was activity, but it was the activity of war, all terminating in distress, disaster, and death.

There was little to remind us of the happy homes of peaceful and contented settlers, or the calm and delightful tranquillity of a colonial settlement. There were no sights or objects of interest to view, bespeaking the advancement of art or education; everything proclaimed that "the abomination of desolation was

standing where it ought not." The churches and chapels were turned into temporary dwelling-houses; the schools were closed, as nearly all the children had been sent away; the printing-offices were full of business, not in extending and influencing commerce, or in announcing the progress of the colony as formerly, but in issuing proclamations and war-news. The agriculturalist's occupation was gone; men who had gone to their duties, summoned by the lowing cattle or bleating sheep, now responded to the bugle call, and thought of their waving corn-fields as things that were. We felt no sorrow, therefore, that our stay was short, and we left the shores of Taranaki with a feeling of deep sorrow at our hearts, not merely for the misfortunes of our fellow-settlers, but for the doom of that lovely province.

THE TARANAKI WAR.

THE origin of the war is made ostensibly to hinge upon a very small and trivial matter. Early in March, 1859, a block of about 600 acres of land was offered for sale by a native, named Te Teira, who surrendered it in the presence of the Governor and a large assembly of natives, amongst whom was Wiremu Kingi, a chief of great power and influence.

Kingi opposed the sale of the land, alleging that the right to sell it was vested in himself and others, who were determined not to give it up. Te Teira persisted that the land was his by an indisputable title, which the Governor was willing to accept. A part of the purchase money was paid to Teira in November. Instructions were given to Mr. Parris, Assistant Land Commissioner, "to take steps to make Wiremu Kingi and his natives aware of the Governor's firm determination to complete the purchase, and that he was

to set about the necessary survey; but in case of any resistance being made, the survey staff was to retire, and he was to intimate to Lieutenant-Colonel Murray that the assistance of a military force was necessary, who was thereupon, agreeably to instructions he had received, to take military possession of the block of land, and the survey be prosecuted under the protection of the troops."

The survey was resisted, but only by about eighty unarmed men. Immediately a proclamation of martial law was issued, to assert the Queen's sovereign authority against *natives in arms;* in accordance with the provision, "Should Wiremu Kingi, or any other native, endeavour to prevent the survey, or *in any way* interfere with the prosecution of the work, military force should be used, martial law proclaimed, and the volunteers called out into active service." Up to this time the matter had been confined to those immediately interested in the sale and purchase of the land,—now the settlers had no option about entering into the quarrel, as all from the age of eighteen to sixty were compelled to do so, unless legally exempted.

The natives, headed by the rebel(?) Wiremu Kingi, determined not to part with the disputed land. They had no legal and peaceable means of redress through any tribunal capable of entertain-

ing their suit, and their resistance, instead of being treasonable or rebellious, had only for its object the assertion and maintenance of their own right to a particular piece of land. A stockade was built upon the spot, and a pah erected on the direct road to the camp. A notice was immediately sent to them in these words:—

"*To the Chief who obstructs the Queen's Road.*

"You have presumed to block up the Queen's road, to build on the Queen's land, and to stop the free passage of persons going and coming.

"This is levying war against the Queen! Destroy the places you have built, ask my forgiveness, and you shall receive it. If you refuse, the blood of your people be on your head.

"I shall fire upon you in twenty minutes from this time, if you have not obeyed my order.

(Signed) "T. Gore Browne."

"Camp, Waitara, 6th March, 1860."

Such is the ostensible cause of the war. Its real origin may, I think, be ascribed to far weightier causes.

In the Northern Island of New Zealand are the two races—British and Maori; races differing in thought, habits, and civilisation, almost as widely as it is possible, but both subject to the same sovereignty. According to the statistics of 1859, the

proportion borne one to the other of the male population was 22,000 British to 30,000 natives. The land (which, be it borne in mind, is the birthright of the natives) is divided in the proportion of seven millions of acres to the British, and eighteen millions to the natives. The superior intelligence of the Europeans, however, has been made manifest in the selection of that division; they having the best harbours, the most accessible and commanding positions, and the best share of available land; in short, in what they have already obtained, they have had the one oyster as their share, and the natives have had the two shells.

There is one Government. The British elect their responsible ministers, and put them in office as their representatives. But these ministers have "no power to interfere with the native race, in any way, by virtue of the functions delegated to them by their constituents. They are at liberty to make suggestions, offer advice, and make laws; but with the express proviso that their counsel need not be taken, and that the laws must not have force until sanctioned by the Government at home." That Government has entered into a solemn treaty with the natives, by which, in return for their allegiance, it guarantees to them its protection and support; yet, practically, they have never, as a body, been under

our law. Had they been allowed a separate council —a competent tribunal for the investigation of their rights and liberties, and a local self-government, invested with powers similar in kind to those of the British—the footing upon which they stood would have been more intelligible to them; or, even had the settlers been allowed to legislate for and with them, and been intrusted with their interests, their position as British subjects would have been better understood. As it has been, the Governors, as representatives of the Government, have had to make promises which they have been unable to perform—to use threats which they had no power to enforce—in short, their position with the natives has been, that "their authority was not real, but merely nominal; that they governed merely by sufferance, and had to connive at what they were afraid to punish." The paternal relationship of the Governors to the Maories has been impaired greatly by the growth of representative government. No chief has yet stood for a seat in the Assembly, and it is not, therefore, with an altogether unreasonable jealousy that they have watched the increased organisation of the colonists, knowing, too, that their natural guardians have been shorn of much of their power in reference to themselves.

The obligations due to her Majesty, and allegiance

to her sovereignty, have been myths and mazes in the native mind which they have never clearly understood. They have not comprehended their position as British subjects, nor the relationship in which they have stood to the Government; and have imagined that there has been a law for the white man and a law for the Maori, when they should have been "all the same as one,"—nor has this been altogether without foundation.

By dwelling upon this idea they have at length come to regard the Government as their enemy; they have seen the land, once indisputably their own, pass from their possession; they have watched the rapid ascendency of the British race, and eyed with a jealous eye the improvements and alterations wrought by the white man; finally, they have seen their own race fast losing power, and rapidly dying away,—and the present war has followed as a last struggle for deliverance from the foreign yoke, from which they have derived immeasurable advantages, but which they now regard with suspicion, and are desirous of expelling for ever.

The desire to revenge what they deem injustice, and to free themselves from a power which treats them, in their own land, as alien and intrusive, is partly the result of their educational training. They are, for the most part, good Biblical scholars, and are

wont to regard the Old Testament histories as applicable to themselves. The wars of Israel, and the deliverances which were wrought for them, they take as typical of their own state. Gideon, for instance, represents their chiefs, and the Midianites the British. Confident in their own powers—for there is scarcely a boundary to their conceit—they vainly imagine that in the end they must come off victorious. Nor is their patriotism fostered by Biblical history alone; the knowledge they have acquired in British history has exerted a great influence over them. They love to talk of the wars Englishmen have fought against the world in defence of their native land—treasure up in their minds the watchwords for battle which they have used—and argue, that if the British have gained such wonderful victories, sometimes against overwhelming armies, why should not they, who have been incorporated into that nation, and been instructed in the use of their arms and modes of warfare, do the same.

It is not to be supposed that such a people can form any clear idea of their own relative strength; all they perceive is, that man to man they are equal, if not superior, to our soldiers. They have their own system of warfare, coupled with an astonishing proficiency in the arts of war as practised by the

British, and are naturally endued with a strong warlike spirit.

Many causes have tended to foster in the imagination of these unfortunate people the idea that the aim of the Government is to secure all their land, drive them off one by one, until the whole should be absorbed and they for ever exterminated.

They saw the increasing European population, the establishment of soldiery, and the encouragement given to volunteer rifle. corps. "Their frequent inquiry was, 'Why all this preparation? Why should every settler be made to bear arms, except it be to exterminate the Maories?' And again and again was the question put—'How much the Governor make a pay to you to fight the Maories for their land? You don't want land; you plenty land; the Governor want land?' No explanation would satisfy them, or remove the fears they entertained. Could the natives stand still and see all this preparation for war without feeling that in the future there was a dark and terrible ultimatum for them? They knew nothing of the white man's more than questionable policy, 'That the best way to promote peace is to be prepared for war.' Their history and experience taught them that preparation was ever the antecedent of ruthless, bloody, and unsparing war."*

* "New Zealand Settlers and Soldiers," by Rev. T. Gilbert, p. 28.

Hence arose the King Movement and the Land League; the former as a protection against any encroachments upon their rights by the Europeans, and the latter to preserve to themselves as a people all the land still remaining in their possession. It is but just to the Maories to admit that there is every excuse for them in desiring a King. They have consistently put forward the inefficient administration of English law in their villages; and the necessity of checking the bloody land-feuds among themselves, more than any direct reaction against the sovereignty of the Queen, was the original motive for this innovation, although, as events have increased and fresh causes for distrust have arisen, it has practically resulted in a determination to ignore the authority of British government altogether.

The King Movement had its origin in rather a singular manner. "William Thompson Tarapipipi, principal chief of Ngatihana, a man of high rank in Maori society, and son of Te Waharoa, a renowned warrior of the last generation, was its chief promoter. Thompson, in conversation with a friend, expressed his great admiration of some of our usages, and especially of the manner in which justice is administered in our Courts. His friend replied, '*E tomo koe i raro i aku huha.*' (Your path is through underneath my thighs.) He inquired the meaning of this strong

figure, and received for reply, '*Me rapu koe.*' (Search it out.) He thought, he pondered, and at length arrived at the conclusion that it must point to oppression and slavery. 'That path,' he reasoned, 'is the path of dogs only; then are we to be treated like dogs? Does the Pakeha intend to put us beneath his feet? But he shall not be permitted.' And he resolved on devising some means to preserve himself and countrymen from the degradation thus figuratively described." The statement is given as it is commonly related in Maori circles. Whether the idea of setting up a King was suggested to his mind by the events already alluded to, or whether it originated with himself, does not appear; but this idea was adopted, and he began to work it out. "We want order and law," said he; "the King could give us these better than the Governor, for the Governor has never done anything except when a Pakeha (white man) was killed."

The King Movement and Land League, once originated, soon became popular, and the unfortunate dispute about Te Teira's land in the Waitara was the occasion to try them. The colonial Government took possession of that block of land without lawful authority. Wiremu Kingi and his people had no option as to their mode of procedure; there was no tribunal to which they could appeal; they were deter-

mined to maintain their position against the aggressive Government, and hence the quarrel, which commenced with the assertion of Wiremu Kingi's *mana*, or tribal right and authority to a few paltry acres, has resolved itself into a question of British or Maori supremacy in the Northern Island of New Zealand. King Potatau *v.* Queen Victoria; Barbarism *v.* Civilization.

And what as yet have been the results of this unequal contest? For eighteen months the natives have held at bay all the force that has been brought against them; they have attacked our strongholds with bravery and daring; they have driven away the settlers from the outlying districts—plundered and burned their homesteads—driven off their cattle in the sight—yea, under the very noses—of the troops, and have retreated when they have felt so disposed into the fastnesses of the bush, enriched with plunder, where our men could not follow. There they have planted potatoes, continued their ordinary occupations, and returned to the prosecution of the war at their own convenience.

In the meantime how has it fared with us? The flourishing settlement of Taranaki has been reduced to a mere citadel; rank weeds and charred wood alone mark the spots where numbers of smiling, happy homes once formed picturesque villages;

ruthless, cold-blooded murders have been committed; the old men, women, and children have been peremptorily sent away from the island, and have had to seek a refuge in Nelson; and overwhelmingly heavy expenses have been incurred by the Government.

Time and space would fail to give anything like even an epitomised history of the war; of the battles of Waitara, Waireka, Mahoetahi, Huirangi, or Matarikoriko; of the blunders occasioned by military incompetence; of the fruitless expeditions to storm empty pahs; or of the innumerable vexations and restraints to which our men have been subject. Nor can we enter into details of the mode of warfare, of "that which we call cunning in our enemies and art in ourselves; that which we describe as ferocity in the natives, but courage in our soldiers; or that which we deem stratagem in war, but treachery in a savage people." Losses, heavy losses, have been sustained on either side, and now a lull has come; whether it is the lull before the storm remains to be told. Hostilities have ceased, peace is talked about, and terms of peace have been proposed, demanding submission to the Queen's authority, restitution of plunder, and surrender of arms, but the restrictions have not yet met with compliance.

The future of the war and the future of the natives

are questions which demand grave consideration. To put down and punish rebellion is the first duty to be done; until then it is idle to talk of peace. The Maories must be brought to acknowledge and understand submission to British authority. A downright unmistakeable victory, not necessarily accompanied by great bloodshed, yet having a terrifying effect, must take place, which can only be determined by a force such as never yet has been gathered in New Zealand. Nor will it do merely to show them that Maori sovereignty can never be established; it must convince them by the power of a strong arm—which is the only power they will acknowledge—that British authority is a reality, and that if they wish to continue in existence as a people, they must submit to its authority. If half measures are resorted to, war, overt or covert, will always be the normal condition of affairs in New Zealand until the race dies out.

"On the action taken by the Government now will depend the fate of the settlers of the Northern Island for many years to come, whether they shall undergo a certain amount of suffering in the long-run. And not only consider the interests of the Europeans, but also the real interests of the Maori race. In our hands, to a great extent, is committed the welfare of that race, and we are all anxious to make a last effort to save them from drifting into rebellion, and to their own

destruction. I have no doubt that it is for their interest, as well as ours, that we should take a firm and decided stand; by putting off the evil day, we shall make it worse when it does come upon us."*

Then, when the evil day has passed, and the war has terminated in a satisfactory issue, the policy which will have to be adopted towards the Maori nation must be something wholly dissimilar to that which has already been in force. Common sense tells us, and events have abundantly proved, that imposing on the natives any form of government, to be worked in any way we please, will not do. Hitherto they have, practically, not been under our law as a body. If they are to be brought within its pale, they must have the benefit of its institutions, and be induced to give their active and intelligent co-operation, in order to work out their own social and political position, in union with the settlers.

We leave New Zealand with a dark, heavy cloud hanging gloomily over it. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," is true in principle with regard to a nation, as to an individual. Perhaps the causes of the present unhappy disturbances which

* Speech of Mr. Weld in the House of Representatives, June 19, 1861.

darken the silvery horizon of New Zealand's prosperity may be traced back to times almost lost in the past—in which our countrymen have not acted the true and honourable part of professedly Christian Englishmen—perhaps to more recent times, in which selfishness, the bane of a young colony, has obliterated the mark that bounds moral rectitude, and has gone beyond its limits. And who knows whether the misery occasioned by the clangour of war echoing through these once peaceful islands may not be the harvest of the seed that has been thus sown?

Be it as it may, the issue is in the hands of God. The future is only known to Him. Still we can look forward with hope to years of peace and tranquillity, when Maori and European will regard each other as brethren, and one common law of right be as freely the refuge of one as the other.

We can look forward to New Zealand rising higher and higher in moral grandeur and commercial importance, until she attains the eminence to which her position gives a title—"The Queen of the South."

APPENDIX.

A.—*Page* 188.

THE NELSON GOLD-FIELDS.

THERE is a notion popular in New Zealand, that when the work of creation was going forward, that colony was overlooked until nearly the termination of the six days, and only finished late on the Saturday night. The reason for this idea is the irregularity in everything connected with the geology of the country. Several coal-mines have been discovered in Nelson, but instead of the seams lying in that natural position, and the lines being continuous, disorder has taken place in every stratification; there appears to have been some immense force at work, which has turned over and disconnected them, so that generally disjointed masses instead of regular mines are found.

So with copper, which has been discovered at the Croixelles, D'Urville's Island, and the well-known Dun Mountain. The ore is not found in regular lodes, only here and there in isolated masses, which renders the prosecution of operations difficult and heavily expensive.

As with coal and copper, so with gold. A prospecting party finds a suitable place to commence work; they are successful in procuring the precious metal in payable quantities, some hundreds of people follow to the supposed mine; but although the field may be worked on every side, and holes sunk to the rock below, perhaps not one other party may meet with more success than finding a few specks. This unfinished and irregular internal organization has given rise to the idea that New Zealand was the latest work of creation.

Gold was first discovered in the Nelson province at Aorere, a beautiful valley in Massacre Bay. Aorere is the native name of the place, and means "gushing wind." Englishmen like indiscriminately to christen every place they visit, and have since named it Collingwood. Honours are divided between the settlers and natives as to the discovery. Some claim to have known the fact of its existence for many years before any attempt was made to turn the knowledge to profitable account. Others state, that when the first settlers went there, eighteen years ago, the natives exhibited gold to them. Be that as it may, the actual working at the diggings did not commence till the year 1857, when some hundreds of people flocked to the place.

One great advantage connected with the New Zealand diggings is, that they are easily accessible—that is, when compared with those in Australia in its early days. The Aorere fields are within a distance of ten to twenty miles from the port; some are not more than three or four miles distant. The appearance of the country about the Aorere is very bold and striking. Far off in the distance is a magnificent chain of snow-capped moun-

tains, known as the Hapiri Ranges, glistening with quartz; below, are hills rising one above the other, broken by deep gorges and gullies, and around is an extensive plain, in parts overgrown with high fern, and elsewhere miles of almost impassable swamp. It is over this country that the diggers have to travel, carrying with them their tents, provisions, long-toms, cradles, and other appliances for working; and many a poor fellow has found himself in the swamp, done up on the journey, the high Toi-toi grass preventing him getting a glance of the direction he ought to pursue, and the moist ground yielding to his weight, often holding him captive until, tired out, he has had to make his bed for the night on his bundles, and wait till fresh strength came to make the completion of his journey possible.

There are two principal kinds of diggings: river diggings, carried on in the beds of the streams; and dry diggings, in the conglomerate and gravel accumulated on the slope of the mountains. The latter were the first successfully worked, and the gullies between the hills at the foot of the mountain ranges were the scene of activity.

In both classes of diggings, the source of the gold is supposed to be the Hapiri Mountains. The Slate River, Appoo's River, Boulder River, Salisbury Creek, and Para-para River, all of which proceed from the same range, have been worked with success. Nature has been doing on a large scale, and from a remote period of time, the very work in kind, but not in degree, that gold diggers do now. By the action of the elements, the rocks have gradually been wearing away, and the heavy particles of gold have been carried down by the streams

and deposited in the gullies, thus preparing for the more minute and detailed operations of man. This agency of nature is proved by the rounded appearance of the gold, and also by the fact, that at the head or upper parts of the streams the heaviest gold has been found. Both classes of diggings have their peculiar disadvantages. The difficulty of procuring water on the dry diggings is an obstacle to individual enterprise. A Company was formed to work a place called Golden Gully, where the water had to be brought from the Para-para, a distance of four miles, in canvas pipes, which were raised on a framework over the open country, and lodged amongst the branches of the trees through the bush where it had to pass. This method is attended with an immense outlay, which can only be borne by Companies, and men on the diggings generally prefer running the risk of making a considerable amount by their own individual exertions, or, in case of failure, losing everything, rather than earn ten or twelve shillings a day in the employment of a Company. The scarcity of water on the dry diggings, however, is not a greater obstacle to success than the superabundance of that element on the river diggings. When a party intends commencing work, their first efforts are devoted to the erection of a dam to turn off the river into another channel. This is a work of considerable time, fatigue, and expense When accomplished, perhaps the claim may not yield sufficient "wages" to pay for lost time,* certainly not

* The term, "making wages," is employed to indicate that the proceeds of the day's labour is equal to the amount paid in the labour-market, which in New Zealand is generally from 8s. to 10s. per day.

enough to compensate for rheumatism and the concomitant train of evils often brought on from working for weeks in water. And even supposing a large sum is obtained, there is always the uncertainty of a rainy season coming on, during which the snow gets melted on the mountains, the river rises in what is termed "a fresh," and the whole of their works are washed away. Then the amount accumulated has to be again invested in repairing damages.

For these reasons there are not many who have worked on the New Zealand gold-fields who can boast of having made very brilliant fortunes, for the quantities found are not in any way comparable to Australia. The nature of the gold on the dry diggings is nuggety, little round pieces varying from the size of a pin's head to that of a pea, while the gold which is obtained in the rivers is more scaly, worn down by the water passing over it. The largest nugget that has been found weighed nine ounces eighteen pennyweights.

From the Aorere to Takaka Valley, comprehending a breadth of twenty miles, gold is everywhere dispersed, and in many places wages are to be made by merely washing the surface in a tin dish; but it is only in distinct and not very extensive localities that at present any considerable quantities have been found.

The advantage of the gold-fields to New Zealand has been very great. During the space between seed-time and harvest, hundreds of small farmers and farm-labourers have gone over and earned their fifteen to twenty shillings a day, with merely the expenditure of a few pounds in expenses connected with outfit and working utensils. Nor does there seem a probability that

the gold-fields will be easily exhausted. During the past year, several new and extensive districts have been prospected which yielded satisfactorily; and, no doubt, when bush tracks are cut, or roads made to render them more accessible, and offer greater facilities for working them, larger numbers of people will be gathered there.

Dr. Ferdinand Hochstetter remarks :—"The Nelson gold-fields are a fact, and that which is at present known of them is but the beginning of a series of discoveries which time will bring to light." He has given the following calculations relating to the only fields (then) known :—"We will reckon the superficial extent of the Aorere and Para-para diggings at 30 English square miles—the average thickness of the gold-bearing conglomerate, at a very low rate, at one yard; and the value of gold in one cubic yard at 5s. Upon this data the value of the Aorere gold-field is £22,500,000 sterling, or £750,000 sterling for one square mile."

Since that time the old works have not been abandoned, and many new fields have been discovered. "Still waters run deep;" and steady persevering work, with a moderate population, is more profitable to a country than a great excitement which draws thousands of people together, without the means of providing for the many, and benefiting only the few.*

It has been estimated that the average wages of all who have worked on the New Zealand diggings have been 12s. per day. This, considering the number of mere

* Since the above was written, a great rush has been made to Otago, where gold has been discovered in larger quantities than elsewhere in New Zealand. The result is that, for every hundred people who have been successful, a thousand have been disappointed. The supply of

adventurers, who, unaccustomed to work, and growing weary of the hardships necessarily attendant on that mode of life, only scratch over a claim and leave it in discontent, is anything but a contemptible average.

The *General Government Gazette* recorded that in August, 1859, the whole produce of the gold-field, from 1857, amounted to about £150,000 sterling; since which time a steady progress has been made.

During the past year very extensive gold-fields have been discovered at Wangepeka, about 50 miles from Nelson. Great expectations are entertained that these will prove even more valuable than those in the Aorere. A road is being cut, and every facility rendered for their development, and ere long a large population may be gathered there.

The New Zealand diggings are yet destined to create a stir in the world, and to attract adventurers from England as well as the neighbouring colonies.

Within an easy distance of port, the greatest difficulties of a digger's life are removed. With a beautiful climate—not exhausting in summer, nor cold enough to prevent the continuance of work in winter—with bush supplying any quantity of fuel, and abounding with birds and wild pigs for food, without a single venomous animal to engender fear, New Zealand is, of all places in the world, the most suitable for the successful prosecution of gold digging.

provisions has been wholly inadequate to the demand, and a great deal of want and privation has had to be endured. The over-crowded province has not been able to afford inducements for its new inmates to settle and cultivate other branches of industry; the labour market has been glutted, and consequently, for the few who have amassed money, many hundreds have been ruined.

B.—*Page* 198.

THE TARANAKI WAR—BATTLE OF MAHOETAHI.

(From the Correspondent of the "Nelson Examiner," November 10, 1861.*)*

STIRRING events have occurred which render it necessary to take advantage of the delay of the *Airedale*, to tell you something about the battle of Mahoetahi, which took place this morning between the troops and the Waikatos. But while the camp and the town may be rejoicing at the return of our brave troops and volunteers from the field of blood and victory, we must not forget that amidst all these manifestations of pleasure are to be seen the melancholy countenances and weeping eyes of those who mourn for their dear but now silent ones; and while distant eyes are poring over these details, let them not begrudge a tear in memory of the brave, whose blood has been so freely offered for the honour of our beloved Queen and country.

Last night a slight skirmish took place between a working party of our men and the rebels, the latter were speedily drawn off with loss. Two were wounded on our side.

This morning about 400 rank and file, with one twenty-four-pounder howitzer, left camp under the command of Colonel Mould, R.E., and Major Nelson, for Mahoetahi, to join another body of men from New Plymouth under the command of General Pratt; and who were now engaged with the rebels in the direction of the Bell Block. After a hasty march, our men arrived at the scene of conflict, and not only claim but deserve the honour of putting the rebels completely to the rout.

It appears to have been the general's intention to occupy Mahoetahi as a military post; and in order to carry out his plan, he proceeded there this morning with about 600 men. On approaching the pah, a line of skirmishers were thrown out, and advanced in this order until within 300 yards of the pah (Mahoetahi), when, observing that it was occupied by rebels, they opened fire, which was speedily returned, the line still continuing to advance. The supports were now ordered up, and a few shells thrown into the pah; this lasted for a few minutes only, for the 65th and volunteers cheered and charged the place, which the rebels observing ran out and entered a scrubby gully, from which they opened a heavy fire upon our men, who with the guns took up positions and commenced a destructive cross-fire, which, with the shell and canister from the guns, did great execution. The rebels bravely maintained their position, heedless of the awful slaughter around them, for about an hour, when they began to retire by one and two at a time, but most of these were shot down before they reached many yards.

Just at this moment our Waitara force arrived, and the quick eye of Major Nelson seeing how matters stood brought his gun into action, and a few well-directed shells, under the direction of Lieutenant McNaughton, forced the rebels out in a mass, who now began a hasty flight, followed by the town party, who shot down and bayoneted several on the south side of the river, while the Waitara party followed their example from the north. The rebels were so tightly pressed that many of them threw away their rifles and cartridge boxes, which fell into the hands of our men. While the pur-

suit was being continued by the men forming the town division, the Waitara division were employed collecting the dead and wounded. Thirty-two dead rebels were laid side by side in the road, fine strapping-looking fellows as ever were seen. Five wounded were taken and attended to by our doctors, and one fine able fellow was taken prisoner; but it is supposed that there are many more lying dead in the fern. Our loss is four killed (two volunteers, and two 65th), and about twelve wounded, including Colonel Sillery (slightly), and Captain Turner (severely). As soon as the troops were collected a strong party was left in possession of Mahoetahi, the remainder returned to their respective quarters at New Plymouth and Waitara, well satisfied with their day's work. The brave Waikatos (for it is ascertained that none of W. King's men were there) are as plucky a set of fellows as ever held a gun, and prove to our commanders that they have no mean foe to contend with. The *Taranaki News*, Nov. 8th, says:—"The fight lasted about an hour from the time it commenced, when the enemy broke and fled; and this may be considered the most sharp, short, and decisive affair that has ever taken place in New Zealand."

C.—*Page* 199.

TARANAKI IRON-SAND.

(*From the "Taranaki Herald," June* 1, 1861.)

Our readers will recollect that one of the first fruits of the late Superintendent and his Executive Council was a measure granting to E. Morshead, Esq., a lease of

the iron-sand upon the beach for the term of 21 years, provided that a half-yearly sum of £500 was spent or incurred in the procuring and smelting of the same during the continuance of the said lease. After procuring the lease, Captain Morshead returned to England for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements.

We are now happy to state that a Company has been formed in England, under the title of the "Taranaki Iron-Sand Company," for the purpose of working it. There are 150,000 shares of £1 each, the whole of which are taken up in England.

The following letter has been received by the Superintendent:—

Taranaki Steel Iron Company (Limited),
Registered Offices,
3, Delahay St., Westminster, March 26, 1861.

SIR,

The first act of this Company after its incorporation is to report officially to you its existence, as the efforts of it must naturally tend to develop the resources of the colony of Taranaki.

The necessary machinery, furnaces, &c., with an efficient staff of workmen, will be shortly shipped, and we sincerely trust that success may crown this great enterprise for the welfare of the Company and the province, which has the honour of having you as its Chief.

The steel produced by the Taranaki sand is far superior to any yet known, conducing to main essentials, hardness and toughness, and peculiarly adapted for plating the vessels of the navy, requiring but *half* the thickness of that at present used, and in consequence producing a lighter and more invulnerable fleet, and the

saving of some millions of money to the Government of this country. We beg, &c.,

For the Taranaki Steel Iron Company,
MARTIN & SOBLECHERO,
Managing Directors.

To His Honour the Superintendent of the Province of Taranaki, New Zealand.

D. — *Page* 184.

THE MOA.

(From the "Wellington Independent.")

A MOA'S egg was found at the Kaikoras, while digging the foundation for a store. It is a foot long, about nine inches in diameter, and twenty-seven inches in circumference. The shell is the sixteenth part of an inch in thickness. A hole is drilled at the end of it, and the egg must evidently have been considered of great value by the natives, as it was found deposited at the head of a skeleton with a number of very large poanamu axes. We understand it is going to be sent home to the British Museum.

(From the "Nelson Examiner," June 12th, 1861.)

About three weeks ago, while Mr. Brunner, chief surveyor of the province, and Mr. Maling, of the survey department, accompanied by a native, were engaged in surveying on the ranges between the Riwaka and Takaka Valleys, they observed one morning on going to their work the footprints of what appeared to be a large bird, whose tracks they followed for a short distance, but lost them at length among rocks and scrub. The

size of the footprints, which were well defined wherever the ground was soft, was fourteen inches in length, with a spread of eleven inches at the points of the three toes. The footprints were about thirty inches apart.

On examining the bones of the foot of a moa in the Museum we find the toe to measure, without integuments, eight inches and a half, and these evidently form part of the skeleton of a very large bird. The length of the impression of the toe of the bird in question was ten inches. The native who was in company with Messrs. Brunner and Maling was utterly at a loss to conjecture what bird could have made such a footprint, as he had never seen anything of the kind before.

On a subsequent morning similar marks were again seen; and, as a proof that they had been made during the night, it was observed that some of them covered the footprints of those the party made the preceding evening. The size of these footprints, and the great stride of the supposed bird, has led to the belief that a solitary moa may still be in existence. The district is full of limestone caves, of the same character as those in which such a quantity of moa bones were found, about two years ago, in the neighbouring district of Aorere. We believe it is the intention of the Government to take steps to ascertain the character of this gigantic bird, whether moa or not, which keeps watch in these solitudes, and the search cannot but possess great interest to all students of natural history.

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